



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

22 MARCH 2018

ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2016/17

**REPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE
RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR MAUREEN WEBBER**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information on the Council's Annual Equality Report, for the year 2016/17.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agree to publish the Annual Equality Report 2016/17.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Annual Equality Report has been developed to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties.
- 3.2 The report contains progress made in year 2016/17 in meeting the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales, which came into force on 6th April 2011, included a requirement for public authorities (including Local Authorities and Schools) to report annually on how it has met the General Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

4.2 Reporting requirements are set out in the following regulations;

- Regulation Seven Collection and publication of information
- Regulation Nine Employment monitoring reporting
- Regulation Sixteen Reporting on compliance with the General duty

4.3 The Council must report the above information on an annual basis, and publish by 31 March each year.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Consultation is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

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

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

9.1 Equality considerations feature throughout Corporate and National priorities and specifically the contents of this report contributes to a more Equal Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The Annual Equality Report has to be published by 31ST March 2018 in order to comply with legal requirements.



Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Annual Equality Report

2016 – 2017

This report can be made available in alternative formats and languages.

To make a request please telephone 01443 444531 or email

equality@rctcbc.gov.uk

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APPENDICES

Appendix One

Employment Monitoring Data

1. Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Council's annual equality monitoring report, which represents the Council's approach to providing information on its work in respect of equality and diversity.

The Council is required under the Wales Specific Equality Duties to report annually on how it has met the General Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010, and this document contains the information required in order for the Council to meet these duties.

Publishing the information in one report covering all requirements will make it easier for interested parties to identify how the Council is delivering on its commitment to equality, its legal obligations and the action plans contained within its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP).

Each section of the report looks at the Council's progress and the final section contains details of future work the Council needs to do.

Once again Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has continued to make our County Borough a more equal place for people to live, work and access services, however we recognise that there are and will continue to be areas for improvement. Publishing this Annual Report will not only help the Council to meet its obligations under the Wales Specific Equality Duties, but will assist you, as citizens to identify these areas and monitor progress on them.

Councillor Maureen Webber
Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Council Business

2. Who We Are

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

The Council is 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.

The Council's priorities set out in the [Corporate Plan](#) are

- **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 are 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
- Community & Children's Services
- Corporate and Frontline Services
- Education & Lifelong Learning.

3. Reporting on Equality

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

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. This report covers the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

What the regulations require:

The Annual Report for 2016/17 must set out:

- The steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information

- How the authority has used this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty
- Any reasons for not collecting relevant information
- A statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information
- Specified employment information, including information on training and pay
- Progress towards fulfilling each of the authority's equality objectives
- A statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives.

4. The General Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general duty on the Council (and other public sector organisations) when making decisions and delivering services to have due regard in how to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (protected characteristics are explained below)
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Protected Characteristics

This is the term used in the Equality Act to identify the types of people who are more likely to experience detrimental treatment and/or discrimination simply because of who they are. The law is designed to protect them, they are:

- Gender
- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity.

The requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also applies to marriage and civil partnership.

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't, the Council also has to think about the 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.

The Council also has to particularly think about how it will tackle prejudice and promote understanding. This report includes information on what the Council has done in order to meet the General Duty.

5. How We Meet The General Equality Duty

To demonstrate how the Council has met the General and Specific Duties relevant information is considered which may include data from local and/or internal sources such as customer surveys, community forums or Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), as well as data from national and/or external sources such as census information, research reports and statistics on hate crime.

Identification and Collection of Relevant Information

When considering how to identify what information should be included in this report the Council first looked at the information it considered when reviewing its SEP, this allowed the Council to reflect and monitor whether the information is still appropriate in assisting the Council to deliver on the General and Specific Duties.

When reviewing the Equality Objectives we looked at quarterly monitoring results and emerging issues and trends from the previous Annual Equality Reports to identify whether the objectives were still relevant.

Full details can be found in the SEP which can be accessed on the Council website at:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/EqualityandDiversity/StrategicEqualityPlan.asp>
[X](#)

The information identified is still very relevant to the delivery of the General and Specific Duties; internal documents provide statistical information that can be used

for determining action and enable comparison to identify improvements or areas for further improvement. Internal strategies and their action plans provide information on how the Council is delivering its priorities. External information, including that with a national context, provides the Council with a raft of data that can assist in developing appropriate and relevant policies and approaches.

The Council recognises that the SEP is not the only area that can identify relevant information and that whilst it is very useful, service areas would also hold information that could assist the Council in identifying how it's meeting the General and Specific Duties. To collect this information a survey was undertaken to obtain relevant information from service areas.

The Council has an EIA process in place, the results of which contribute to the information contained within this report.

Employment monitoring data as provided from the Council's HR system - Vision and the e-recruitment system have also been included as part of the relevant information. It should be noted that employment monitoring information includes teachers and all school based employees.

Use of Information

When considering what information should be used it was important that areas of good practice were identified across service areas to demonstrate that a commitment to delivering equality exists throughout the Council. It is however recognised that there will also be areas for improvement and these will be included in the 'Future Work' section of this report.

Information used in this report includes:

- The Council's Corporate Plan (2016-2020)
- Self Service Evaluation from Service Areas (2016/2017)
- Service delivery/projects (2016/2017)
- Employment practices
- Consultation and engagement programme
- EIAs (2016/2017)
- Employment monitoring information (2016/2017)
- Monitoring and delivery of the SEP action plan (2016/2017).

Equality Information from Service Areas

Many service areas had examples of good practice which help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duties. The following information provides a snapshot of the work carried out across the Council.

Within the **Access & Inclusion Service** relationships with families where English is an additional language (EAL) are improving as a result of the use of professional translators, as in some circumstances informal translation by a child or family member may not be appropriate. Attendance & Wellbeing Services have become more heavily involved with new families moving into the area who haven't yet enrolled their child / children in school, explaining expectations around attendance and support available e.g. school transport, uniform grants. We now aim to develop information packs for families in their first languages. We are currently piloting delegating an element of funding to support EAL learners within targeted schools.

From April 2016 an internal joint working relationship has been developed between Attendance & Wellbeing and EOTAS (Education other than at school) to provide and review provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils. A group is now being developed within the Central South Consortium to work together and share good practice and a policy has recently been developed.

A new senior wellbeing educational psychologist will be undertaking wellbeing initiatives in schools.

There has been an increase in the number of referrals to the Attendance & Wellbeing Service for wellbeing, where issues are below the social services threshold but concerns are still present. Referrals are now more likely to require an element of complex, ongoing support for wider issues rather than only focussing on school attendance. There has been a particular increase in referrals relating to social, emotional and wellbeing needs linked to mental health concerns. Whilst this is a positive development in terms of advocating for families, for example with health, and providing support, this is a potential concern in terms of available resources.

Cross working between the Attendance & Wellbeing Service and the Youth Engagement & Participation Service allows a pathway of support to be offered for young people prior to referral to statutory services.

Frontline staff and team leaders within the service received LGBT+ awareness training with a particular focus on gender identity and implementing good practice. Several senior managers sit on an Equalities Working Group as part of the Stonewall Education Index to monitor the progress of the work.

The Equality Pilot has taken place in three mainstream secondary schools and all staff have reported that they feel it has had a positive impact. Pupils have engaged

and support groups have been established that empower and equip pupils with tools to tackle inequalities in their settings. Each school has indicated an interest in forming a Task and Finish / Focus Group to review the strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

All 21st Century school buildings are disability compliant, so fewer children with disabilities need to be educated outside their own communities. This also means that schools are now more accessible to parents with disabilities, and community groups are also able to use school facilities which are fully accessible.

Mental Health issues for young people are increasing and we are working with partners as part of the Cwm Taf Action Plan on Mental Health and Wellbeing to improve services.

We are effectively reducing the number of young people who are NEET (not in Employment, Education or Training) in the Borough through a graduated response model based upon vulnerability profiling data. The Youth Engagement and Participation (YEP) Officers provide a dedicated lead worker response for young people identified by Careers Wales as being in Tier 1 (unknown to services), 2016-2017 saw the YEP Service locate 100% (190) referrals and support 26% of those into Education, Employment or Training. The Post 16 Transitional Support Workers are the identified lead worker responders for young people (not in EET), 2016-2017 saw the SEET team contact 993 referrals, 53% (538) were supported to progress onto education, employment or training. Both functions are set out in the Welsh Government Youth Engagement and Progression Framework. These functions are also supported by staff from a number of partner agencies e.g. Communities First. Within the **Adult Education Service** the Community Learning Grant and the Franchise Agreements require the service to target its provision on specific disadvantaged groups. Potential learners in these groups in general have lower level qualifications, are unemployed or economically inactive and have not engaged in learning for long periods of time. The barriers faced by these learners are often complex and traditional forms of teaching have failed to engage or retain them. Consequently, the service has developed new ways of working in order to facilitate their development and support them to achieve a successful outcome. Roll-on roll-off courses are an example of this. Also, the timing and location of courses is varied regularly to meet the needs of learners and enable them to remain on provision.

All requests from individuals and groups are considered and referral systems have been developed over the past four years to ensure that if the adult education service cannot meet their needs, they will be referred to another provider who may be able to do this.

Employment routes provision and employability provision is delivered across a number of training partners from various sectors with mentoring support provided by initiatives such as Communities4Work and Communities First as appropriate.

Provision continues to be delivered to learners with severe and moderate learning disabilities. A total of 10 Independent Living Skills courses were delivered in 2016/17 attracting a total of 124 learners. This provision has a designated tutor with specific experience of teaching learners with a range of disabilities. The provision is broad and includes units on Welsh History, Essential Skills and Healthy Living and the achievements were recognised with an annual awards ceremony.

The service has facilitated activities for people who suffer from Alzheimer's disease and an excellent partnership exists with the organisation. The service now has a recognised weekly class that supports learners and their partners within the same group. This is an area that could be further developed as other groups would benefit from this type of relationship.

The Council continues its commitment to the **Armed Forces Community Covenant**. The Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community of Rhondda Cynon Taf and its local Armed Forces community. The pledge recognises the dual respect between the Council, its partner agencies, its communities and our Armed Forces personnel (serving and retired) and their families.

More information is available on the following link:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/ArmedForcesCovenant/CovenantGeneralInformation.aspx>

There are plans to appoint an Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer in 2017/2018 to further develop our commitments in this area.

The **Arts Service** has produced it's own Strategic Equality Plan that outlines their commitment to providing an inclusive programme of events, particularly in relation to theatres.

Information on the [HYNT scheme](#) is available on rct-theatres.co.uk and in the theatres brochure. This national scheme enables eligible people to access free tickets for their carers to help them attend live events and cinema.

The service has been supported by the Council's Equality and Diversity Team in terms of accessibility at the theatres and making reasonable adjustments that improve access for service users, including increasing access for wheelchair users, young families, older people, and opportunities for income generation through diversifying the programme offered at the theatre.

Arts & Creative Industries officers contributed to an Equalities Training Day as part of Fourteen (Olympic 2012 Legacy project) in the mid-Rhondda area, to look at the perception of disability.

During 2017 the service worked with the Council's Libraries Service to deliver an LGBT+ Festival at the Park & Dare Theatre for LGBT History Month which was supported by the Council's LGBT+ Network 'Perthyn' and the Staff Allies Network.

Our Older People's Advisory Group is established at the Park & Dare Theatre, informing the development of a programme for this protected characteristic group, including participation in the Gwanwyn Festival. This year resulted in a sold-out performance of Lee Gilbert and his Big Band at the theatre, and a daytime programme encouraging creative activity. The learning from this has also transferred to the Coliseum Theatre where a series of Silver Screenings are being developed alongside its Concert & Cakes offer and matinee performances each season.

Our family-friendly offer continues with relaxed film screenings and performances at both theatres, including monthly Kids Club at the Coliseum Theatre.

Coaching and mentoring support and targeted projects for people within the various protected characteristic groups is also provided by our knowledgeable officers within the theatres and the arts and creative industries team.

The service is creating a series of case studies that demonstrate the social impact of the arts in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act's 7 Well-being Goals. This will support us to evaluate our provision and obtain feedback from partners and participants.

Bereavement Services have abolished a former structure for 'out of area fees' whereby a surcharge was formerly applied to non residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf area for some services provided by Bereavement Services. There is now no differential in the charging structure for both residents and non residents, providing an inclusive, equal and fair service provision of all service users.

There has been development on an Infant Garden in Llwydcoed Crematorium which provides memorials exclusively in memory of infants. We have worked in partnership with SANDS Group and Midwifery staff on this memorial area.

Preparations are being made to change the charging structure for cremations / interments of children in line with Welsh Government Memorandum of Understanding. This will raise the age of free services from 16 years to 18 years.

The **Care2 Work and Step in the Right Direction Traineeship programmes** continue to go from strength to strength. Since April 2015 there have been successful outcomes which include:

- Care2Work – 39 young people engaged in the Care2Work programme with 33% (13) securing employment, 51% (20) enrolled on Further Education or training and a further 15% (6) volunteered with various agencies.
- “Step in The Right Direction “ Traineeship – 8 young people engaged onto the programme, 5 completed and 4 gained employment and 1 gained a place with the University of South Wales.

Children’s Services provides information, advice and support to all who meet relevant thresholds regardless of ethnicity or culture. They operate 24/7 365 days a year. The Emergency Duty Team provides an out of office hour’s response.

Prior to any meeting held with service users the team establishes the preferred method of communication for immediate and future use.

The service takes advantage of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to connect with residents in the area.

Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken prior to any strategic developments. Access to the service is through a single point (MASH – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) which allows for a multi agency response and consistency of approach.

Any issues that arise are referred to the Council’s Equality and Diversity Team. A recent issue reviewed was around the practice of providing Free School Meals for Looked After Children placed with Foster Carers and those placed with Kinship Carers.

Community Cohesion Objectives were set in 2014 and were an amalgamation of common denominators across both the Rhondda Cynon Taf’s and Merthyr’s existing action plans. The objectives are outlined below:

Objective 1 – Build a strong network of working groups to manage and deliver a Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Strategy.

Objective 2 – Mainstream Community Cohesion by linking and embedding into Single Integrated Plans and other key local strategies across the Cwm Taf region.

Objective 3 – Impart knowledge and information on subjects related to community cohesion across the Cwm Taf region.

Objective 4 – Increase opportunities for the reporting of community tensions which includes the experience of hate crime and the susceptibility of individuals and groups to radicalisation.

The Cwm Taf **Community Cohesion Group (CCG)** was formed to replace the disbanded Multi Agency Diversity Forum (MADF) and consists of representation from statutory, voluntary and community organisations. There are a number of Council services represented at the meetings including the Equality and Diversity Team, Community Safety Partnership, Attendance and Wellbeing and Education. The CCG meets quarterly and stop and search and hate crime figures are reported and discussed, multi agency solutions are discussed, and updates are received on how all parties are contributing to the Public Sector Equality Duties. Members of the public attend these meetings to give their input on their experiences of harassment and discrimination in their communities

Our **Community and Children's Purchasing and Commissioning Service** monitors that all contracts have an accompanying service specification that specifies the arrangements for equalities; this is reinforced through the contract monitoring processes as are provider recruitment and training arrangements.

Within the **Community and Prosperity Service** area, a tackling poverty review was undertaken which recognised some inconsistencies in tackling poverty programmes. As a result progress has been made to integrate the delivery and commissioning of programmes to ensure provision is inclusive, equal and fair. For example, the commissioning of the Adult Education department to provide employability programmes across all Clusters has enabled the service to redistribute core resources to target areas outside of the Communities First Clusters so that all adults across the Borough can access this provision regardless of where they live. This approach has informed the Council's new Employability Grant, which will maintain this arrangement going forward.

There are proposals to introduce an improved Team Around the Family approach (Resilient Families Service) which will provide the opportunity to deliver swift, effective, consistent and bespoke support to families across the Borough. The requirement includes that providers are inclusive and wherever possible enable disabled children and young people to access mainstream provision. The introduction of the Integrated Parenting Support Framework will ensure that programmes are available to all families who would benefit from them across the Borough, not just those who live in Flying Start eligible areas. The introduction of the Children with Additional Needs Service (CANS) Team, will ensure that support services are available to all children and young people, regardless of their additional need or disability.

In the last year **Corporate Estates** has improved and developed closer links with Equality and Diversity colleagues. The service has facilitated and hosted numerous events in this area such as Time To Talk mental health awareness, mindfulness courses, staff networks promotion events (Perthyn, Allies networks) and staff consultation exercises.

Our **Customer Care Service** continues to offer a fully inclusive service with locations and opening hours widely publicised to all and some of our key processes directly facilitate fair provision e.g. the website supports people with sight loss, Blue Badges support a wide range of disabilities etc. Our One4all centres are designed to meet disability access standards and offer a hearing loop function. Our website is reviewed annually through a SOCITM review, which includes accessibility testing in which we scored 2 out of 3, which is above the Welsh average. SOCITM is a society for IT practitioners in the public sector. The Digital Accessibility Centre is also commissioned to review our new website.

We offer a Sensory Line in our Contact Centre which promotes a dedicated 'text phone' for Deaf customers or those with hearing loss.

We record sensitive information for Lifeline clients including their medical history, preferred language, religion, and other special requirements which enables us to provide a seamless service. Lifeline supports 88 customers at threat of Domestic Violence for Police prioritisation.

Due to customer concerns regarding wheelchair accessibility in our One4all centres a new interview room design has been rolled-out at all One4all centres to better accommodate the needs of wheelchair users.

The **Disability Forum** was set up as a direct result of feedback from the Reaching Out Disability Conference in 2003. The Forum is involved in monitoring the delivery of the SEP Action Plan and regularly contributes to a wide range of consultations such as the Council Budget Setting Process and Welsh Government initiatives.

The Equality and Diversity team also inform forum members of items that may be of interest to them, this has led to members becoming involved in local issues.

The organisational **Disability Officers Group** continues to meet. The working group is made up of officers who either deliver services for disabled people directly or are involved in making services more accessible or have an element of dealing with disability issues as part of their role. The group meets on a quarterly basis to share information, identify areas of best practice and promote internal communication.

Within the **Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Community Safety Service** areas the service priority continues to deal with all intelligence, complaints, proactive inspections and investigations with regard to the legislation and the offence, as opposed to the characteristics of the offender, business operator or client. This ensures equal access to the service and appropriate protection for all users and sectors of the community.

Licensing Officers have attended the Council's Disability Forum meeting. Taxi compliance operations have taken place to ensure that wheelchair users are treated fairly when requesting a taxi, with members of the Disability Forum and the Staff Disability network taking part in this. The operation found no infringements which is a positive outcome. The Council is also the first local authority in Wales to show full compliance with the legal requirement to publish a register of wheelchair accessible vehicles licensed by the Council.

Partnership work with Pontypridd BID has resulted in wheelchair accessible taxi's being made more easily available to wheelchair users in Pontypridd Town Centre.

The discussions with the Rhondda GP Cluster will open the Falls Awareness Programme up to wider members of the community and will also include a referral mechanism from health professionals, to ensure an inclusive, equal and fair provision for all older people across the Borough.

The section administers the Older Persons Grant. The application forms and guidance are sent to known older persons groups and organisations within RCT inviting them to bid for funding to assist them in meeting the Ageing Well in Wales themes. During the administration of this grant this year, we became aware of additional groups within the community that were not included on our database. As a result, the database has been updated and all known groups within the area will receive invitations to bid in any future funding rounds to ensure that the process is inclusive, equal and that there is fair service provision for all older people.

This year the Food and Health & Safety Team have successfully bid for grant money from the Food Standards Agency to allow us to have our business advice packs translated in three different languages, namely Chinese, Bengali and Turkish.

The use of translation services is widely used across the service to assist with ensuring compliance across all ethnic groups and fair treatment of witnesses and suspects in criminal investigations.

Fleet Services have been working to meet increasing demands and have improved the specification on the mobile library vehicles therefore allowing us to access more streets. (Currently problems exist with traffic calming measures being too high for our vehicles to contend with).

The Council has a number of visitor attractions and our **Heritage Service** ensure they are fully accessible to members of the public. Lido Ponty offer bilingual information and all on site signage includes brail text.

Working with the Dementia Society, employees at Lido Ponty, Dare Valley Country Park and the Welsh Mining Experience have undergone specialist training in understanding the needs of users with dementia, in line with the aspirations of the Dementia Society, the facility is now classed as dementia friendly.

All of our Lido Lifeguards receive specialist induction training on the use of the Pool Pod. This specialist equipment assists disabled users on entering the pool, and offers greater potential in maintaining the customers' dignity compared to traditional methods of pool hoists.

Lido Ponty has worked with a number of charities to host charitable fundraisers and provide advice and support in the planning of their events, to ensure that any users with specific needs can be accommodated.

A **Highways** programme of improvements to bus borders improving accessibility has been ongoing over the last 6 years with an annual spend of approximately £250k / yr. In 2008/09 RCT was placed at 21st in Wales with only 3.23% of its bus stops being equipped with accessible kerbs. Figures for 2016/17 indicate that 34.4% of the 1,584 bus stops in the Borough now have raised access points to facilitate easier access, placing us at 9th in Wales.

The Council provides 247 designated parking spaces in its paid car parks for disabled users, this equates to over 7% of the total spaces, and exceeds the number recommended in guidance. Disabled users are not charged for parking in these designated bays.

Each year the Council marks **Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD)**. In January 2017 a public event was held at the Coliseum Theatre which was organised in partnership with South Wales Police and Communities 1st. A diverse range of people attended. It was a contemporary event which was linked to modern day hate crime and raised awareness of reporting Hate Crime in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Pupils from a number of our schools contributed to the event. Members of Cardiff's Jewish community attended the event. The Library Service supported HMD by arranging book displays on the Holocaust.

Our **Housing Service** has undertaken a Local Housing Market Assessment which identifies housing needs in different areas. The survey includes questions about age, gender, sexuality, race and disability. Services are then tailored around the geographical areas of need or the needs of certain groups.

Housing allocations made through the Common Housing Register are monitored to ensure that they are representative of the households waiting for housing on the register and also in relation to the population of the Borough. To date, allocations have always been reflective of both. When people apply for housing we ask questions about age, gender, sexuality, race and disability in line with the Equality Act 2010. In 2017, Housing Services linked in with Communities First so that people wanting help to access Homefinder www.homefinderrct.org.uk through the website can do so as part of Digital Fridays.

On all new social housing developments, we aim to provide at least one adapted bungalow in order to increase the supply of this type of housing overall.

People who experience domestic abuse are supported by Housing Services to ensure that they can access safe and secure housing. There are a range of options available including refuge accommodation, being given priority in the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme to enable effective move on to suitable and safe housing or assistance through the target hardening scheme.

In 2017, all Housing staff have received safeguarding and equality training which was a departmental business plan priority.

Human Resources always strive to promote service provision being inclusive, equal and fair in terms of service provision. All team members have completed various e-learning modules covering equality and diversity issues and provide advice to service areas on all aspects of equality and reasonable adjustments.

The **ICT Section** has a Digital Strategy which supports the inclusion agenda, with ICT playing a key role in support and deploying the new 'Digital Fridays' initiatives across our libraries. These aim to provide support and guidance to residents to increase their ICT skills, confidence and competency. We provide access to computers and the internet for those with no IT hardware at a number of public places across the Borough. We have enabled access to IT Services and the Internet through free public Wi-Fi in our Libraries, Leisure Centres, Community First sites and theatres for residents for those who wish to access the internet through their own device.

Our **Legal and Democratic Services** provide an Electoral Registration Support service for residents with special requirements whereby they visit residents to assist with their registration. There is also a process to facilitate on line registration which can be adapted for residents with disabilities.

Leisure Services continued investment in fitness facilities has meant the volume of old equipment has been replaced by newer updated equipment, giving better access for all. Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) equipment is automatically included in any new tenders.

Recent fire damage at Hawthorn Leisure Centre has allowed the centre to adapt the changing provision available for customers with disabilities, where once there were none. The centre now has a fully functioning accessible changing room.

Within the scope of the National Exercise Referral Scheme we have broadened the referral categories to include residents' experiencing mental health challenges.

Our sports development team have achieved the Bronze InSport standard for inclusive sport opportunities for those with a disability. Work is progressing towards the Silver standard, and has resulted in more mainstream physical activity opportunities becoming inclusive for those with a disability.

Our leisure centres have continued to work with a number of disability groups, and in addition to disability netball and wheelchair rugby, there are new clubs developing for badminton and rebounders disability trampolining.

One of our centres offers transgender swimming sessions

Library Service provision is designed to meet the needs of all sectors of the population from cradle to grave and it has continued to do this as evidenced by the Welsh Government's confirmation that it meets the 18 core entitlements as required. The Library Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf continues to provide a comprehensive service including:

- 13 static libraries
- 3 mobile libraries (focus on the areas where there are no static libraries and reaching the nearest library may be difficult)
- A housebound service (infirmity due to old age, limited mobility and sight loss affect the majority of customers of this service)
- Children and Young People's service (includes E-teens provision and activities for children during school holidays)
- Schools Library Service support schools through provision of materials to aid literacy and project work.

The service is currently assessing how to ensure that customers receive the best possible service from the mobile and housebound provision that is provided. An options paper has been prepared which will enable the development of mobile community hubs in partnership with other services and partners as well as widening

access to the Housebound service to include people who are full-time carers or who cannot carry books if they have to visit a static library.

The service has continued to facilitate a wide range of activities for groups which were outlined in last year's report. In addition, in 2017 there have been the following developments:

- a partnership with Drink Wise Age Well to facilitate a LGBT group for older people in Hirwaun Library
- more Welsh-medium activities have been delivered through our partnership with Cymraeg i Blant and Menter Iaith
- discussions as part of the wider Society of Chief Librarian meetings on how to support people with dementia who use libraries.

The service is serious about supporting local people to gain employment and work experience to improve their skills whatever their level of ability. A Digitisation Apprentice has been employed to support the Digitisation Programme and the service now has 5 regular volunteers who work in a variety of capacities, for example, supporting the delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge and assisting with local history and digitisation projects.

The materials purchased for customers includes materials in a variety of formats (large print, audio, digital, hardback and paperback) and, in 2016/17, the service met the required performance indicator for the percentage of materials stocked in the medium of Welsh.

The service also has subscriptions for a variety of online services that allow customers to access information free of charge for example, findmypast, Zinio magazines, online journals etc so that they are not disadvantaged due to poverty and are able to complete research and learn whatever their financial circumstances.

Life4Living groups have been launched for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the company of others in a safe and welcoming atmosphere. The ethos of Life4Living is very inclusive (all ages, abilities/disabilities) and offers a warm welcome for people to form new friendships and have fun.

The focus of Life4Living is to promote people's strengths to enjoy life no matter what has happened in the past and current members enjoy the groups so much, they are often the highlight of their week. Attendees range from people in their 20's to their 90's. Members need to be considerate to others, especially if they have mobility issues, medical conditions, visual or hearing impairments etc as everyone who attends deserves to receive respect and kindness.

Our **Public Relations, Tourism and Events Team** continue to offer events that are spread throughout the Borough, with the vast majority still being free of charge to attend, in order to enable access from all residents. Where possible these are arranged in differing locations year on year to ensure all communities benefit from the services being offered.

The **Social Care Workforce Training and Development Service** plan sets out its values and its commitment to anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice. All training programmes work to this commitment The Qualifications and Credits Framework (QCF) Assessment Centre has an equal opportunities policy and performance against this is monitored on an annual basis through the external Quality Consultant visits.

The **Stonewall Diversity Champions** programme is Britain's good practice employers' forum on sexual orientation. The Council became Diversity Champions in 2013. The Equality and Diversity Team continue to work closely with Stonewall Cymru's workplace team to develop practices that support LGBT employees as well as having an impact on the community.

The **Streetcare and Waste Service** delivers a range of services to all residents and sections of the community and works to provide services in a fair and equitable way whilst striving to go the extra mile to meet individual needs where appropriate. Examples include assistance for bin collection offered to residents with limited mobility, safeguarding training has commenced with sections of frontline staff, awareness and letter campaigns are compliant with Welsh language standards.

We provide additional assistance to residents who struggle to comply with our policies such as assisted collections for residents who have limited mobility and extra black bag allowances for residents who are unable to sort their waste because of sight loss.

We are currently working in partnership with the University of South Wales to translate awareness leaflets into a number of languages to cater for the multi-cultural student population of Treforest to tackle waste and recycling issues in the community.

The Enforcement Unit and the Community Green Team have carried out projects such as litter-picks, building of outdoor classrooms including the provision of facilities for wheelchair access and sensory gardens.

Transportation Services have a high impact on a number of protected groups, though it is substantially positive in its effect, as the service ensures that its policies and services are consistent and equitable in their delivery and provision.

The Bus Service Impact Assessment Tool is now embedded into the annual routine and is used to prioritise and inform service (dis) investment, with those with the highest scores being subsidised in the context of the funds available. The tool examines the number of users per journey; cost per passenger; availability of alternative services; impact on the network; shift workers; healthcare; hospital visiting; education and training; and has proved to be transparent and in conjunction with a full Equality Impact Assessment, has helped to identify potential issues and mitigate the impact.

The Council published the results of its 2016 resident engagement in February 2017. Those who responded to the public transport section were mainly very positive, especially those who were eligible for free transport. The network, over 90% of which is commercially provided, was described as 'excellent', 'used frequently', 'really good for the elderly' and 'love the social aspect of going on the bus'. Whilst those who were satisfied with the network overall increased to 81% (up from 80%), those who were satisfied with the reliability of the buses increased to 87% (up from 72%).

Free bus travel is provided to the elderly and disabled, ensuring that the service is inclusive. All residents over 60 are entitled to receive a concessionary bus pass and 54,345 take up this offer. A further 5,167 passes are issued those who are under 60 but who have a disability.

The SEN transport provision is tailored to the individual needs of the learner by a specialist team within the service, and reflects the physical make up of the community, with 927 of the 12,582 learners transported having additional learning needs. Throughout the year, further drivers and passenger assistants have received special training in autism and epilepsy awareness, first aid and understanding and managing challenging behaviour.

Taking on board feedback from the Local Access Group, the service has secured funding from a number of sources to undertake corridor based bus stop enhancements, as well as meeting a number of specific local requests. The work involves the installation of new shelters (where footway space permits), new bus stop poles and flags, new raised kerbs (boarders) with tapering at either end to provide step free entry onto the buses (all of which have step free entry), the resurfacing of the passenger standing area and the renewal of bus stop road markings. This investment in bus stop infrastructure has been significant and in 2016/17 it had helped the service to have 34.4% of its 1,584 bus stops equipped with accessible raised kerbs, becoming the 9th in Wales.

The Council is a partner in the **Wales Interpretation and Translation Service** (WITS) and has a Service Level Agreement for delivery of the service provided via Gwent Police (transferring to the City of Cardiff Council during 2017/18). During

2016/17 there were 344 bookings made through the service using 21 languages and BSL interpreters.

The five most requested languages during 2016/17 were: Lithuanian, Mandarin, Urdu, Portuguese, BSL.

The **Welfare Rights Service** is accessible to Social Care Service Users and their Carers via a referral from Practitioners. Awareness raising sessions have been held across Adults and Children's Services to promote the availability and benefit of the service during the year.

The Complaints Service is accessible to Social Care service users, their carers and families. Consideration to accessibility to the service is made particularly for people with a sensory loss including arrangements for people to be supported by an advocate if required.

Delivery of Council Strategies

The Council consults and engages with its residents to collect information that is used to plan and prioritise, identify areas for improvement and service change, set and monitor performance standards and measure satisfaction on the quality of the services we provide.

The Council has developed an ongoing face to face approach to engagement with residents which has continued in 2017 and aims to provide a conversation with our residents that allows us to 'dig deeper' into their original responses. It helps the Council and its partners find out what residents think about where they live and the services they receive.

The Consultation Team attended events/forums to undertake face to face engagement, including the Disability Forum, Older Person Forums and RCT wide Youth Forum. We also undertook some road shows in parks and town centres, for a consultation on a new Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order. In addition, we asked people to comment on a selection of Council Services and to describe their experience of the services during our annual budget engagement approach, where we continued discussions with residents at town centre road shows, leisure centres and day centres. We used an online budget simulator to allow residents to have a go at setting the Council's budget themselves and a number of Leader road shows were held. These services were based on current Council priorities/investments or where we specifically needed to obtain the views of our residents.

We have continued to use online and social media engagement as one of our methods to obtain resident views and promote consultations.

We have continued to develop our links with residents who are 50 plus through engagement with the Older Person Forums, including a number of specific events in the summer and we now have a regular update on the Disability Forum agenda.

We have continued to develop our RCT wide Youth Forum that links with the Council's District Youth Forums and representatives from school councils.

The Consultation Team have also supported a number of service area consultations in 2017 including; events, transport, education, housing, funding applications, leisure & Sport RCT, social care satisfaction, regeneration, libraries, Public Spaces Protection Orders and staff Welsh language skills surveys.

As part of the Council's commitment to continuously improve, the feedback received from engagement activities is being used to help evaluate the impact the Council's work is having on service users. This evaluation aspect of the work is linked to our Consultation Web pages and our online consultation Hub, where a mechanism to evaluate consultation and engagement activity is held and automatically sent to officers when consultations end.

We have developed our approach of collecting equalities monitoring data through consultations and we include relevant questions in all surveys we carry out. During service change consultations we also include a question on protected characteristics which asks respondents whether or not they could potentially be affected by the proposal or change because of their protected characteristic.

To regularly report and feedback to the Equality and Diversity Team we have improved our 'Planned Consultation' spreadsheet to capture what is planned, what the outcomes were following the consultation and the equalities monitoring data that was captured.

A joint approach to consultation and engagement is coordinated through a Joint Public Engagement Group and Strategy reporting to the Cwm Taf Collaboration Board. The group aims to provide an effective and efficient approach to consultation and engagement across the partners of Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. Central to the delivery of this plan is for all partners to follow the Participation Cymru National Principles of Public Engagement and the National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales. Public engagement is about working together to improve services.

The Public Service Board partners in Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf will ensure that this form of public engagement becomes core business. This means that

public engagement is fundamental to how services are identified, designed, commissioned, delivered and evaluated.

The focus for partnership working this year has been to provide continued support to a partnership project called Understanding Our Communities. Public services across Cwm Taf, including Councils, the Health Board, the Police, the Fire Service and third sector organisations have provided information which informed the assessments required as part of The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

The Council's Performance

The Council's main strategic plan is its [Corporate Plan – The Way Ahead](#). This plan sets out the Council's priorities for the four years between 2016-2020. The detailed actions to deliver these priorities are set out in plans which are monitored and scrutinised by Councillors every quarter as part of the Council's [Performance Reports](#) to Cabinet. At the end of the year, the plans are also subject to more in depth challenge, review and evaluation, the results of which are then included in the Council's annual [Corporate Performance Report \(pdf\)](#).

Non Collection and Effectiveness of Information

Whilst considerable relevant information has been collected for this report, it is acknowledged that it is sometimes difficult to collect and monitor all information in a Council as large as Rhondda Cynon Taf. A number of cross-Council networks already exist such as the Disability Officers Group to ensure that information and good practice are monitored and shared, however it is recognised that more needs to be done to encourage a consistent approach in information sharing.

Whilst there are a number of good practice examples where service areas are delivering for people of different protected characteristics, there is still improvement needed overall around the consistency of information collected. How we address this is included in the future action section of this report.

6. Equality Objectives

Equality objectives have been designed to assist us to lead and better perform on the General Equality Duty. Our equality objectives are:

- Hate Crime and Addressing Negative Attitudes and Behaviours
- Developing More Robust Monitoring Arrangements
- Gender Pay.

Hate Crime and Addressing Negative Attitudes and Behaviours

What We Have Delivered

Hate Crime

We previously reported that a Hate Crime Strategy has been developed for Rhondda Cynon Taf. The strategy's action plan has been in place for 2 years and has delivered on the following:

- South Wales Police (SWP) hate crime statistics are reported and scrutinised at the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group
- A number of reassurance visits have been conducted by the RCT Community Cohesion Officer and SWP Hate Crime Officer
- Hate Crime progress reports are discussed at the Community Safety Partnership Board
- We continue to raise awareness of hate crime reporting procedures and circulate hate crime leaflets
- Hate crime awareness sessions have continued to be delivered to Council staff
- We have provided hate crime awareness training for staff in housing associations and community groups
- We have worked in partnership with Education providers and delivered hate crime awareness sessions during freshers week and at events at the University of South Wales and Coleg Morgannwg
- Further discussions have taken place with schools regarding planned future awareness of school staff and pupils
- We marked Holocaust Memorial Day with an event at the Coliseum Theatre
- A week of activities was undertaken for Hate Crime Awareness Week; awareness raising stands were staffed in local supermarkets, hospitals and schools during the week.

Addressing Negative Attitudes and Behaviours

Challenging Attitudes

We offer Dignity and Respect training, which covers our responsibilities under the Equality Act, challenging stereotypes, inappropriate language and behaviour. It's an interactive session with many opportunities for participants to challenge their assumptions. Over 200 employees from a range of services including Community and Children's Services, our theatres and a primary school have attended Dignity and Respect training this year. Training feedback remains to be positive with most participants stating they will reflect on the session and alter their behaviour in the workplace. Participants are also encouraged to sign up to Stonewall's #Nobystanders Campaign which encourages colleagues to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour.

We've held a number of coffee mornings which our Allies Network have supported to raise awareness about different groups of people.

We have a regular presence on the Council's intranet site Inform to raise awareness of a range of world days such as:

- United Nations Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- International Women's Day
- Eating disorders
- LGBT History Month
- World Mental Health Day
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Commitment to Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme

The Council's commitment to Stonewall's Diversity Programme continues with ongoing progress in this area. We support a number of initiatives which include the following:

- A sustained LGBT network 'Perthyn'
- Ongoing growth of the Allies Network
- A visible senior LGBT Champion
- Improvement to monitoring forms to collect data around sexual orientation
- Attendance and engagement with residents at Pride Cymru, in partnership with other Welsh Councils
- Regular sexual orientation information on Inform and the Council Website which includes blogs from staff network members
- Raising the Rainbow Flag for LGBT History Month, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia and Pride week
- Supporting our theatres in LGBT History Month events
- Promoting the Rainbow Laces campaign
- Encouraging support of the #NoBystanders campaign.

Commitment to the Time to Change Wales Organisational Pledge

In December 2014 Councillor Mike Forey signed the Time to Change Wales Organisational Pledge on behalf of the Council. By signing the pledge we have committed to tackling stigma and discrimination around Mental Health in the workplace.

Each month the Equality and Diversity Team hold a 'time to talk' session at a Council location. Sessions have been held at all main Council venues as well as some depots. These are drop in sessions to encourage staff to discuss mental health and

these have been extended to Secondary Schools. To compliment these, each month a member of staff does a blog on Inform about how they live with a mental health condition.

Five mindfulness sessions were delivered across the organisation by Valleys Steps for World Mental Health week in October 2016. Nearly 100 employees attended these sessions.

Developing More Robust Monitoring Arrangements

Working with the Council's Performance Management Team we were able to obtain relevant information from all service areas as part of the Council's Self Service Evaluation process to highlight in this report. From last year's information, training was identified and delivered to all employees within the Housing Service.

Discussions have taken place with some service areas about how they collect monitoring data and this will be further developed. Work will continue with Service Areas to review what service user information is collected and monitored.

Gender Pay

Gender Pay Gap

An organisation's gender pay gap is the difference between the average male and female pay rates. It is calculated by dividing the average female hourly pay rate by the average male hourly pay rate.

The Council is required to publish the gender pay gap between male and female employees. It is also required to publish this data separately on employees in Education (teaching employees).

The Equality and Human Rights Commission strongly advise publishing separate full time and part time gender pay gaps. It is considered that any pay gap of 5% or more is considered significant and in need on further analysis.

The 2017 Equal Pay Audit identified the following Equal Pay gaps:-

2017	Combined Gap	Full Time Gap	Part Time Gap
All Employees	+ 14.06%	- 10.10%	+ 6.02%
Non- Teaching	+ 14.66%	- 7.66%	+ 5.81%
Teaching	+ 6.28%	+ 5.79%	- 1.08%

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees. A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

Commitment to the Women Adding Value to the Economy (WAVE) Project

To address the Gender Pay gap, the Council has been part of an innovative project - the WAVE project in partnership with Cardiff University. Workforce data has been robustly analysed and areas of gender pay disparity have been identified. An area of disparity is women employed on Grades 1 to 3. A graduate officer worked on this project for 6 months and undertook research into this group of staff. As part of this research two reports were presented to the Council's Senior Leadership Team recommending internal work experience and a suite of flexible working practices. Agile working has been rolled out across the Council following a successful pilot, and a number of hot-desking locations have been created. A project group is undertaking the implementation and monitoring of this initiative.

As part of the gender pay objective, unconscious bias training has been rolled out to around 500 managers including a face to face session followed up by an e-learning package. The feedback has been positive with managers agreeing it is a thought provoking topic.

Overall Progress

As can be seen from above, the actions are progressing well and are monitored by various methods and by the Council's Performance Management Team.

The ongoing monitoring process identified that minor changes needed to be made to some of our actions. In addition to this, previous Annual Equality Reports highlighted that due to changing circumstances and information, the Equality Objectives and the action plan will need to be reviewed. This will ensure that these changes could be reflected and to ensure that the action plan is up to date and deliverable.

7. Equality Impact Assessments

The Council has had an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process in place for a number of years which is carried out under the following circumstances:

- Where new policies or practices are developed (including corporate plans, annual business plans and the annual budget)
- Where changes to existing policies or practices are proposed, and when conducting expenditure reviews and programme evaluations
- Where there are proposals to withdraw from or discontinue an existing policy or practice

- Where the Business Planning process has identified relevance to or implications for equality.

The process is regularly reviewed and takes into account the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council introduced a screening process in January 2012 which is designed to make the process as effective as possible and to ensure that any information gathered at the screening stage can be used if a full EIA is required. However, the Council automatically carries out a full EIA on its Change proposals process.

The table below includes some of the EIA's carried out in 2016/2017 and gives a brief summary of the results and action taken.

Equality Impact Assessments

Service Area	Policy/Procedure	Result
Community and Children's Services	Relocation of residents from Maesyffynon Care Home	Full EIA – action plan developed.
Community and Children's Services	St Mairs Day Centre – transfer of service to a Third Party provider	Full EIA – action plan developed.
Cwm Taf Initiative affecting Community and Children's Services	Cwm Taf Integrated Assessment & Response Service	Full EIA undertaken – positive impacts for older people. Ongoing monitoring.
Education and Lifelong Learning	21 st Century Schools – Community Primary Schools for Cwmaman.	Full EIA undertaken – action plan developed.

Full details of decisions are included in Cabinet reports which are available on the following link:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Committees/Committees.aspx>

8. Employment Monitoring Data

The Council must collect and publish on an annual basis the number of:

- people employed by the authority on 31 March each year by protected characteristic
- men and women employed, broken down by:
 - job
 - grade (where grading system in place)
 - pay
 - contract type (including permanent and fixed term contracts)
 - working pattern (including full time, part time and other flexible working patterns)
- people who have applied for jobs with the authority over the last year
- employees who have applied to change position within the authority, identifying how many were successful in their application and how many were not
- employees who have applied for training and how many succeeded in their application
- employees who completed training
- employees involved in grievance procedures either as a complainant or as a person against whom a complaint was made
- employees subject to disciplinary procedures
- employees who have left an authority's employment.

All of the information above must be presented for each of the separate protected groups. The exception to this requirement is the data on job, grade, pay, contract type and working pattern, which must be broken down only in relation to women and men.

This information is attached at Appendix One - Employment Monitoring Data.

9. Procurement

The Council operates the SQuID which is part of the National Procurement Website, www.Sell2Wales.co.uk.

It contains a set of core questions commonly asked at the selection stage, and has a database of suppliers' answers stored for re-use, and a tool for buyers to generate a

selection questionnaire using a risk-based wizard for each procurement project. The idea is that working together these three things deliver a number of benefits:

- Increased efficiency for both suppliers and buyers, by allowing standard questions and answers to be stored for future use, by keeping the number of questions to a minimum, and also by encouraging buyers to only seek information from suppliers if they can be clear about exactly how the information will be used.
- Greater standardisation of the selection stage, whilst also allowing for tailoring of questions to meet the specific requirements of the procurement.
- Increased transparency of the selection process and how responses will be evaluated – so that suppliers are able to work out easily whether or not they wish to bid for a particular opportunity, how to optimise their proposal and how to present it in an effective way.
- Improved opportunities for small medium enterprises (SMEs) and local businesses to compete on a more equal footing as a result of a carefully considered question set that removes some of the barriers to entry for them.

It includes a section on equal opportunities and is in line with the guidance on procurement published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/>

10. Accessible Information

The Council produces information in a wide variety of formats according to need. Service areas record requests for alternative formats from service users to ensure that these are provided.

Accessibility Guidelines are available to employees on the Council's Intranet, these provide information on the types of accessible information available, what it is and does and includes a list of suppliers so that employees can source requested formats.

The Council has adopted the RNIB Clear Print Guidelines to increase readability of its documents.

11. Future Work

We will continue to work towards achieving the actions as outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan.

On our hate crime actions we will continue to work closely with partners. We will roll out a hate crime e-learning package to all managers and we will continue to deliver

hate crime awareness sessions. Victims of hate crime will continue to get support and reassurance visits.

We will continue to engage and consult with different sections of our community, including the LGBT community and disabled community, to ensure our services meet their specific needs.

We will continue to meet our responsibilities under the Disability Confident scheme.

We will continue to challenge stigma around mental health by arranging monthly Time to Talk sessions throughout the Council and raising further awareness with managers.

We will continue our commitment to the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme and ensure we support our LGBT employees.

We will continue our commitment to the Stonewall Equality Education Index to ensure that our schools build on the work they are doing to celebrate difference and tackle discrimination.

We will continue to deliver Dignity and Respect training to colleagues across the Council and inform them of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and to encourage them to challenge negative attitudes.

We will expand our Allies Network and provide training and support for this group to ensure they are able to support and signpost effectively.

The WAVE action plan will continue to be monitored and developed.

12. Contact Details

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 and progress in delivering equality and removing discrimination.

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

Melanie Warburton
Equality & Diversity Adviser
Rhondda Cynon Taf Council
Ty Elai
Dinas Isaf Industrial Estate

Williamstown
Tonypandy
CF40 1NY

Telephone: 01443 444531

email: equality@rctcbc.gov.uk

Employment Monitoring Data

Equality monitoring information is stored against all employees' records in the Council's payroll and human resources information system (Vision). The information is requested at the recruitment stage and entered on to their record at that point.

The Council encourages all employees to provide this information and an equality monitoring survey is carried out on all employees every two years in an attempt to increase the information held.

In preparation for the extended employee monitoring requirements being introduced as part of the Equality Act, the Council carried out an equality monitoring survey of all employees in 2011. This survey included questions that covered all protected characteristics except pregnancy. This question was not asked as it was felt that information on pregnancy and maternity would already be held on employee records and the time period allowed for return could mean that the information provided would be out of date.

The Equality & Diversity Team worked with other service areas to identify other useful information which resulted in the questionnaire including sections on the use of British Sign Language, Welsh Language ability and whether or not an employee had caring responsibilities. This information was provided statistically to the service areas to inform their work and strategies.

Statistical analysis of the information is contained in the following tables and covers all Council employees including teachers and school based employees.

People Employed by Protected Characteristic

The following information has been provided using employees' national insurance numbers; this ensures that where an employee may work in more than one job their details will be included only once to avoid duplication of information. It includes teachers and school based employees. Some comparisons will be made to the local demographic of the borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf as over 80% of employees live in the Council area.

Gender

The table below shows the gender breakdown of employees:

Gender	Total	% of Workforce
Male	2814	25.9%
Female	8036	74.1%
Total	10850	100%

This table clearly indicates that women make up the majority of the Council workforce, this has been consistent for a number of years. This is also comparative with other local authorities in Wales.

Age

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by age group:

Age Group	Total	% of Workforce
16-24	741	6.8%
25-34	2030	18.7%
35-44	2655	24.5%
45-54	3311	30.5%
55-64	1876	17.3%
65+	237	2.2%
Total	10850	100%

There has been little variation in the age profile from the previous year.

Disability

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by disabled and non disabled:

Identification	Total	% of Workforce
Disabled	232	2.1%
Non Disabled	8810	81.2%
Prefer not to say	28	0.3%
Information not held	1780	16.4%
Total	10850	100%

Information is held on 84% of employees. A small percentage of employees have indicated that they are disabled but this is unlikely to give the true picture of disability in the workplace. Although the staff equality profile questionnaire gives the definition of disability, some employees with a 'defined' disability may not identify as having a disability.

National Identify and Ethnicity

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Number
Asian	11
Asian Chinese	2
Asian Cornish	1
Asian Indian	1
Black	7
Black African	1
Black British	1
Chinese	4
Mixed Other	15
Mixed White & Asian	1
Mixed White & Black African	1
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	3
Other	27
Prefer not to say	10
White	6262
White British	1109
White Cornish	2
White English	28
White Irish	7
White Other	8
White Scottish	7
White Welsh	1295
Not Known	2047
Total	10850

Staff identifying themselves as an ethnic minority is comparative with the demographic of Rhondda Cynon Taf where 1% of people identify themselves with an ethnicity other than White British, Welsh, English or Scottish.

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by national identity:

National Identity	Number of Employees
African	6
Any Other Asian Background	3
Any Other Mixed Background	2
Any Other White Background	19
Bangladeshi	1
British	1786
Caribbean	1
Chinese	4
English	249
European	18
Indian	6
Irish	23
Other	14

Scottish	28
Welsh	5426
White and Asian	4
White and Black African	2
White and Black Caribbean	1
Not Known	3257
Total	10850

Information is held on 70% of employees with the majority of employees identifying themselves as Welsh followed by British.

Religion or Belief

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by religion or belief:

Religion	Total
Christian	2621
Muslim	2
Hindu	6
Jewish	1
Buddhist	10
Sikh	1
Other	107
% of workforce identifying with a religion	25.3%
None	2300
Prefer not to say	293
Information not held	5509
Total	10850

Information is held on 51% of employees with the predominant faith being Christian. 50% of the local population identify themselves as Christian, with 40% regarding themselves as having no religion.

Sexual Orientation

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by sexual orientation:

Sexual Orientation	Total
Heterosexual	3628
Gay Man	27
Gay Woman/Lesbian	36
Bisexual	13
% of workforce identifying a sexual orientation	34.1%
Prefer not to say	205
Information not held	6941

Total	10850
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Information is held on 36% of employees. This is an increase of 1% since reported last year. As part of the Stonewall Diversity Champion's Programme, work has and will continue to encourage more employees to complete this category on equality monitoring forms.

Pregnancy and Maternity

As at 31 March 2017 there were 136 employees on maternity leave none of which were involved in disciplinary or grievance cases. During the year 2016/17, 349 employees had been on maternity leave during this period of time.

Gender Reassignment

Specific information has not been published due to the possibility of identification. The Council has a Gender Reassignment Policy in place which was developed some years ago as a result of an employee asking for support. Since that time the policy has been accessed and support provided as and when required by employees.

Regulation Nine - Gender Specific Information

Regulation Nine of the Specific Equality Duties in Wales requires the following specific information to be provided in respect of gender breakdown.

The number of employees employed at 31 March 2017 broken down by:

- Job
- Grade
- Pay
- Contract type
- Working pattern.

This information has been provided on the basis of actual job numbers so that those employees who work in more than one job are included in all the jobs they are employed in so the numbers may be different to those in the previous section. Once again the information includes teachers and school based employees.

The following table/s provides the specific information required:

Breakdown of Employees by Gender and Job

There are over a thousand job titles within the Council so for ease of demonstration they have been broken down into job families within the competency framework.

Job Family	Female	Male	Grand Total
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Administrator	966	251	1217
Ancillary	1458	564	2022
Assistant Headteacher	43	31	74
Community and Social Care	3435	313	3748
Deputy Headteacher	93	41	134
Frontline and Customer Care	241	164	405
Headteacher	76	54	130
Middle Manager	140	80	220
Skilled Manual Worker	36	112	148
Strategic Manager	33	39	72
Supervisor	166	185	351
Teacher	1286	434	1720
Technical, Specialist & Professional	314	279	593
Unqualified Teacher	10	6	16
Total	8297	2553	10850

As last year, the data provides very little surprises with the majority of women working in 'traditional' female areas, particularly in the Community and Social Care setting; this will be more closely examined as part of the Gender Pay Objective within the Strategic Equality Plan.

Breakdown of Employees by Gender & Grade

The Council operated the following grading systems as at 31 March 2017.

- Chief Officers (Head of Service and above)
- National Joint Council
- Teachers / Education

The table below sets out the breakdown of employees by gender and grade:

Employees by Gender & Grade – Chief Officers

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Chief Executive	0	1	1
Group Director	0	2	2
Director Level 1	1	3	4
Director Level 2	1	3	4
Service Director Level 1	1	2	3

Service Director Level 2	1	5	6
Head of Service Level 1	13	11	24
Head of Service Level 2	4	6	10
Total	21	33	54

Chief Officer posts held by females are largely on the lowest Chief Officer grade.

Employees by Gender and Grade – National Joint Council

Grade	Female	Male	Total
GR1	268	89	357
GR2	976	46	1022
GR3	600	166	766
GR4	907	299	1206
GR5	780	447	1227
GR6	1101	298	1399
GR7	520	130	650
GR8	256	125	381
GR9	210	119	329
GR10	158	139	297
GR11	280	112	392
GR12	137	62	199
GR13	102	57	159
GR14	10	6	16
GR15	42	28	70
Total	6347	2123	8470

This information indicates that while 75% of the total Council workforce is female, it is females that dominate the lower pay grades. This is an area that continues to be reviewed as part of the Gender Pay objective within the Strategic Equality Plan.

Employees by Gender and Grade – Teachers/Education

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Education Psychologists and Advisers	68	25	93
Leadership Group/Headteachers	77	55	132
Deputy Headteachers	140	74	214
Teachers	1369	452	1821
Total	1654	606	2260

The figures above indicate that females make up 73% of the education profession.

Individual salary grades of Education is complex to summarise but on analysis there is a fairly even split of male/female across all salary points with no obvious discrepancies in respect of ability to move through the grades. The grades and salary points are based on nationally agreed pay scales and there are specific requirements for each grade and how employees move through them.

Employees by Contract Type / Working Pattern

Contract Type	Female	Male	Total
Permanent Full Time	2415	1900	4315
Permanent Part Time	1659	219	1878
Permanent Part Time Term Time	2032	70	2102
Permanent Term Time	143	22	165
Temporary Full Time	246	176	422
Temporary Part Time	130	48	178
Temporary Part Time Term Time	733	62	795
Temporary Term Time	33	5	38
Casuals	645	312	957
Total	8036	2814	10850

For permanent members of staff the breakdown of female/male is comparable to the overall workforce. Although 75% of the overall workforce is female, a much higher percentage of those females compared to males are working on part-time or term-time only basis.

Applicants for Employment and Promotion

There were a total of 343 vacancies advertised during the year 2016/2017. The following table indicates the results of the recruitment monitoring for the same period.

Applicants for Employment and Promotion by Protected Characteristic

	Applicants	Shortlisted	Appointed
Male	1392	868	208
Female	2593	1561	377
Minority Ethnic	155	60	8
Disabled	184	97	10
LGB	141	72	23

The numbers of people appointed in each category reflect the general make up of the Council as a whole.

Training

Equality monitoring is carried out in respect of attendance at internal training courses only and has been undertaken by the use of equality monitoring forms that now monitor all protected characteristics. Sexual orientation and pregnancy and maternity were added during 2014/15.

Identification of the need for training, learning and development is carried out through the Council's workforce planning and performance review systems. Managers will discuss with employees during personal development interviews training, learning and development needs which are aligned to the performance review and job competencies. The results of these feed in to a departmental or divisional training plan.

The Council does not currently monitor whether training requests are refused as the process used to identify training does not lend itself to this type of monitoring. This however will be considered.

There were a total of 384 equality monitoring forms returned in 2016/17.

Training by Gender

Group	Male	Female	Transgender	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	20	20	0	0	0	40
Community & Children's Services	43	114	0	0	2	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	16	7	0	0	0	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	22	91	0	0	1	114
Not Specified	9	39	0	0	0	48
Total	110	271	0	0	3	384

Training by Age

Group	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	11	11	8	6	4	0	0	0	40
Community & Children's Services	7	34	42	45	28	1	1	1	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	9	6	3	5	0	0	0	0	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	11	25	33	37	7	1	0	0	114
Not specified	13	8	9	12	6	0	0	0	48
Total	51	84	95	105	45	2	1	1	384

Training by Ethnicity

Group	British	Chinese	Cornish	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	White and Black Caribbean	Other	Prefer not to say	Total
Chief Executives	8	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	1	0	40
Community & Children's Services	55	0	0	4	2	0	91	1	6	0	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	8	0	0	1	0	0	11	0	3	0	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	28	0	0	2	1	0	82	0	0	1	114
Not specified	15	0	0	2	0	1	30	0	0	0	48
Total	114	0	0	9	3	1	245	1	10	1	384

Training by Religion or Belief

Group	Christian	Buddhist	No religion	Other	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	13	0	20	0	2	5	40
Community & Children's Services	61	1	65	5	11	16	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	5	0	16	1	0	1	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	47	1	55	5	3	3	114
Not specified	12	0	30	0	1	5	48
Total	138	2	186	11	17	30	384

Training by Pregnancy and Maternity

Group	Are currently pregnant or have been pregnant during last 12 months	Not currently pregnant, nor have been during last 12 months	Prefer not to say	Not known	Total
Chief Executives	0	39	0	1	40
Community & Children's Services	3	138	2	16	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	0	22	0	1	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	4	107	1	2	114

Not specified	1	44	0	3	48
Total	8	350	3	23	384

Training by Sexual Orientation

Group	Heterosexual	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Chief Executives	36	1	0	2	1	40
Community & Children's Services	132	7	0	7	13	159
Corporate & Frontline Services	22	0	0	0	1	23
Education & Lifelong Learning	111	1	0	0	2	114
Not specified	44	0	1	0	3	48
Total	345	9	1	9	20	384

Disciplinary & Grievance

Disciplinary and Grievance cases are recorded and monitored through the Vision System. There were a total of 237 cases covering disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work and disciplinary action resulting from sickness absence in 2016/2017. The tables below provide equality monitoring information for these cases:

Gender

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Male	82	50	29	1	2
Female	155	84	58	5	8
Total	237	134	87	6	10

There has been a considerable reduction in the number of Dignity at Work cases from the previous year which could be attributed to the introduction of conflict coaching.

Age

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
16 – 24	8	6	2	0	0
25 – 34	37	22	14	0	1
35 – 44	53	23	24	2	4

45 – 54	73	42	26	2	3
55 – 64	66	41	21	2	2
65+	0	0	0	0	0
Total	237	134	87	6	10

The table above identifies that in 2016/17, more discipline and sickness absence cases occurred within the age ranges of 45-54.

Disability

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Disabled	21	6	15	0	0
Non Disabled	196	115	65	6	10
Information not held	20	13	7	0	0
Total	237	134	87	6	10

Ethnicity

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Asian	1	1	0	0	0
Black	0	0	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed	1	0	0	0	1
White	207	116	76	6	9
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Information not held	28	17	11	0	0
Total	237	134	87	6	10

Religion or Belief

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
No Religion	62	35	23	0	4
Christian	51	32	16	2	1
Other	6	2	3	1	0
Prefer not to say	3	2	1	0	0
Information not held	115	63	44	3	5

Totals	237	134	87	6	10
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Sexual Orientation

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Heterosexual	80	42	32	2	4
Gay/Lesbian	2	2	0	0	0
Bisexual	1	1	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	2	1	1	0	0
Information not held	152	88	54	4	6
Totals	237	134	87	6	10

Gender Reassignment & Pregnancy and Maternity

There were no employees in these categories involved in disciplinary, sickness absence or grievance cases.

Leaving Employment

Information gained from the Vision System shows that a total of 1230 employees left the employment of the Council in 2016/2017, which included 32 employees who were made redundant. It should be noted that these employees were school based, where the decision on redundancy rests with the relevant school in accordance with School Governance Regulations. The tables below indicate the number of leavers and reasons for leaving during 2016/17:

Reasons for Leaving by Gender

Reason for Leaving	Female	Male	Total
Age retirement	37	19	56
Death in service	8	3	11
Dismissed	1	3	4
Early retirement (Teachers)	2	3	5
End of contract	200	72	272
Failed probationary period	2	0	2
Ill health	9	6	15
Mutual agreement	86	33	119
Redundant	28	4	32
Transfer to another Council	11	7	18

Voluntary	329	144	473
Voluntary early retirement with redundancy	81	25	106
Voluntary redundancy	106	11	117
Total	900	330	1230

The gender breakdown of those leaving reflects the gender breakdown of the Council as a whole.

Reason for Leaving by Age

Reason for Leaving	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Age retirement	0	0	0	0	25	31	56
Death in service	0	0	0	1	8	2	11
Dismissed	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
Early retirement (Teachers)	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
End of contract	68	95	45	34	19	11	272
Failed probationary period	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Ill health	1	0	2	2	8	2	15
Mutual agreement	0	13	22	35	39	10	119
Redundant	0	2	5	6	19	0	32
Transfer to another Council	0	8	7	3	0	0	18
Voluntary	41	167	104	87	61	13	473
VER with redundancy	0	0	0	0	93	13	106
Voluntary redundancy	1	15	33	51	14	3	117
Total	112	302	219	221	291	85	1230

The majority of employees left due to the end of their contract or voluntarily, with the majority of employees over the age of 55 leaving due to opportunities to take Voluntary Early Retirement.

Reason for Leaving by Disability

Reason for Leaving	Total
Age retirement	1
Death in service	2
End of contract	9
Ill Health	2
Mutual agreement	8
Voluntary	7
VER with redundancy	3

Voluntary redundancy	1
Total	33

Reason for Leaving by Ethnicity

Reason for Leaving	White	Ethnic Minority	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	51	0	5	56
Death in service	10	0	1	11
Dismissed	4	0	0	4
Early retirement (Teachers)	5	0	0	5
End of contract	180	0	92	272
Failed probationary period	1	0	1	2
Ill health	14	0	1	15
Mutual agreement	100	0	19	119
Redundant	25	0	7	32
Transfer to another Council	12	0	6	18
VER with redundancy	102	0	4	106
Voluntary	348	3	122	473
Voluntary redundancy	102	0	15	117
Total	954	3	273	1230

Reason for Leaving by Religion or Belief

Reason for Leaving	Christian	Other	None	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	19	2	7	1	27	56
Death in service	2	0	3	0	6	11
Dismissed	3	0	1	0	0	4
Early retirement (Teachers)	1	0	0	0	4	5
End of contract	44	0	50	8	170	272
Failed probationary period	1	0	1	0		2
Ill health	2	0	2	0	11	15
Mutual agreement	29	1	21	2	66	119
Redundant	13	1	1	0	17	32
Transfer to another Council	1		4	1	12	18
Voluntary	100	2	113	15	243	473
VER with redundancy	40		15	3	48	106
Voluntary redundancy	28	2	20	3	64	117

Total	283	8	238	33	668	1230
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Reason for Leaving by Sexual Orientation

Reason for Leaving	Hetero- sexual	Gay/ Lesbian	Bi- sexual	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	22	0	0	2	32	56
Death in service	3	0	0	0	8	11
Dismissed	2	1	0	0	1	4
Early retirement (Teachers)	1	0	0	0	4	5
End of contract	33	0	0	9	230	272
Failed probationary period	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ill health	2	0	0	1	12	15
Mutual agreement	43	0	1	2	73	119
Redundant	10	0	0	0	22	32
Transfer to another Council	2	0	0	0	16	18
VER with redundancy	45	0	0	0	61	106
Voluntary	127	3	1	7	335	473
Voluntary redundancy	38	2	0	1	76	117
Total	330	6	2	22	870	1230