



Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Annual Equality Report

1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

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1. Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Council's Annual Equality Monitoring Report for 2024-2025 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 237,700 (Office of National Statistics (ONS) – Census 2021). The Council is the largest employer in the local area and the third largest local authority in Wales, over 79% of employees live within the Council boundaries.

The Council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and we work to ensure that this is demonstrated in our service delivery and in our employment practices.

Our Corporate Plan 2024-2030 '[Working with Communities](#)' was agreed by Council in April 2024. This plan builds on the strong foundations of our previous plans and at the same time recognises the changes we need to make to meet the unprecedented service and financial challenges ahead. It sets out 4 Well-being Objectives and underpinning priorities. Our Well-being Objectives are:

1. People and Communities - supporting and empowering RCT residents and communities to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.
2. Work and Business - helping to strengthen and grow RCT's economy.
3. Nature and the Environment - A green and clean RCT that improves and protects RCT's environment and nature.
4. Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language - Recognising and celebrating RCT's past, present and future.

The Corporate Plan also sets out our Vision for an RCT where:

'All people, communities, and businesses can grow and live in a healthy, green, safe, vibrant, and inclusive County Borough where they can achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives and work, both now and in the future'.

Our Vision, Well-being Objectives and priorities can only be delivered by a well-run Council. This means a Council that has a positive organisational culture, that values its staff, manages its resources wisely, and looks to continually improve what we do to have the best impact for residents and meet the many challenges we face. Within the Plan, we have also set out commitments to residents, staff and partners.

Regular feedback from our residents and staff through conversations and surveys helped shape this plan. In addition, we put in place a new conversation 'Let's Talk about what matters to you' to check that we were on the right track. The majority of responses supported our Vision and Well-being objectives and highlighted the strong

feeling people have about public services generally and how much they are valued within communities

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 10,119 employees in a variety of service areas and roles based within the following groups:

- Chief Executives
- Community & Children's Services
- Education & Inclusion Services
- Finance, Digital and Frontline Services.

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 retrospective report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

What the regulations require:

The Annual Report for 2024-2025 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:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or Belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual Orientation.

When thinking about how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, 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 relating to 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.

Full details can be found in the SEP which can be accessed on the Council website at: [Strategic Equality Plan](#)

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 is meeting the General and Specific Duties.

Many of our service areas have examples of good practice which help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED). The information is obtained through our internal performance management systems.

As part of this performance management process, the Chief Executive reviews how individual service areas are demonstrating their compliance and commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duties. Whilst there are some excellent examples of good practice, some of which are highlighted later in this report, some areas have more to do. Work will continue to raise awareness and understanding of the PSED with the aim of fully embedding equality matters into all aspects of our service delivery.

In addition to the good practice in our service delivery and workplace, ensuring Diversity in Democracy is commitment from our elected Members, and the Council is working to support their [Diversity Pledge](#).

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

Employment monitoring data is provided from the Council's HR system iTrent. It should be noted that employment monitoring information includes teachers and all school-based employees.

THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE

As previously mentioned, the Council's main strategic plan is the [Corporate Plan](#). The detailed delivery actions contained in this plan are monitored and scrutinised by Councillors every quarter as part of the [Council's Performance](#) Reports to Cabinet.

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 to ensure that information and good practice are monitored and shared, however it is recognised that improvements can always be made to encourage a consistent approach in information sharing.

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. Information used in the 2024-2025 report includes:

- The Council's Corporate Plan (2024-2030)
- Service delivery/projects (2024-2025)
- Employment practices

- Consultation and engagement programme (2024-2025)
- EIAs (2024-2025)
- Employment monitoring information (2024-2025)
- Self Service Evaluations (2024-2025).

DELIVERY OF COUNCIL STRATEGIES

Engagement and Consultation

The Council continues to engage and consult with residents to help shape services, identify priorities, and understand where improvements are needed.

We further developed the Let's Talk RCT engagement website during 2024-2025. The site is now our main platform for collecting feedback and sharing information about consultations.

Key improvements include:

- A past consultations page, enabling residents to view closed consultations from the last 12 months.
- Links to decision notices, Cabinet reports and other outcomes, improving transparency and showing how people's feedback influences decisions.
- Better monitoring of how users navigate the site, helping us understand which tools, formats and content types work best.

Over the year, we supported or managed more than 100 consultations, receiving over 17,000 responses – an increase of approximately 6,000 from the previous year. In addition, over 1,200 people engaged directly through the Let's Talk website.

Examples of projects delivered through Let's Talk include:

- Let's Talk Budget
- Let's Talk Tonypany
- Draft Adult Social Care Strategy (2024–2030)
- Let's Talk Your Views
- Eisteddfod Feedback.

Alongside digital engagement, we supported a range of face-to-face events across RCT. These sessions helped us:

- reach residents who may be digitally excluded;
- gather feedback on service changes;
- provide advice and information directly to communities;
- join up consultation activities across different service areas

We continue to make engagement activities as accessible as possible by:

- increasing the use of Easy Read, Plain English, and Welsh-language materials;
- offering alternative formats on request;
- using a freepost address and dedicated telephone line for residents who prefer non-digital engagement;
- working with community networks, including the ten Neighbourhood Networks, to share information locally.

Our [Involvement Strategy](#), adopted in 2025, strengthens our commitment to inclusive engagement and sets out how we will continue to expand access to consultation opportunities

Equality Information from Service Areas

Many service areas have examples of good practice which help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duties. The information is normally obtained through our internal performance management systems. This section highlights a snapshot of some of the good practice examples that the Council has in place to demonstrate our compliance and commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duties.

Armed Forces Covenant

We delivered awareness sessions on the Armed Forces Covenant to help staff understand their responsibilities in supporting armed forces personnel and veterans. Around 650 employees took part. We also updated our Armed Forces webpages and provided awareness sessions to partners including the Health Board, Police, and older people's forums emphasising the unique challenges faced by armed forces personnel and veterans.

Case Study

A veteran living with dementia was referred to the Veterans Advice Service by his son-in-law, who had also served in the Armed Forces. The veteran and his wife, who is living with Alzheimer's, were struggling to manage daily tasks and remain safely at home. Following a full assessment, our Armed Forces Liaison Officer arranged for them to access the Council's Telecare service, providing 24-hour monitoring and reassurance to help them live independently for longer. Their financial situation was also reviewed and we identified that both were eligible for the Severely Mentally Impaired (SMI) Council Tax discount. With support, they successfully received full exemption, easing the financial pressures they were facing. In addition, they were referred to the Royal British Legion Dementia Nurse

Service for ongoing specialist support. Through this coordinated assistance, the couple now has increased financial security, enhanced safety at home, and continued access to care tailored to their needs.

Children's Services

Children's Services worked with Foster Wales to create country guides for practitioners and foster carers supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. These guides help carers understand the backgrounds of young people arriving from countries such as Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, South Sudan and Syria. Local guides were also created for RCT, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend to help young people settle into the area.

Community Safety

Our Domestic Abuse Service Information and Safety leaflet stipulates that no-one is excluded from being a victim of abuse, references the meaning of diversity and provides contact information for a range of services that can support minority groups including males and those from ethnic groups. Staff within the Service provide outreach and home visits for those who are not able to travel or who have accessibility or financial hardship working within a risk management framework to ensure staff safety.

Education and Inclusion Services

Workshops were held with schools to understand under-reporting of bullying. Reported incidents have since increased. Racial bullying incidents remain low, though category changes mean year-on-year comparisons should be made cautiously. Biggest increases in reported incidents related to race in secondary schools and homophobia and family status or Children Looked After in Pupil Referral Units.

A 3 year Accessibility Action Plan is being delivered, and schools' Accessibility Plans and Strategic Equality Plans have been reviewed. Disability-related tribunal cases also remain very low. We give schools regular advice on equality, and this is reflected in all their policies. When parents raise concerns about possible discrimination, they are supported by the central Access and Inclusion (A&I) Teams and SNAP Cymru, who work with schools to resolve the issue. Following presentations to Access and Inclusion Teams and senior managers on the Council's 'See it Right' guidance, we now plan to audit written documents to make sure they meet this guidance and are accessible to all.

Human Resources

Our Mercury Middle Management Programme has been enhanced now including sessions led by Diversity & Inclusion, Occupational Health, Performance Management, and the Health Determinants Research Collaboration teams. These additions aim to broaden delegates' understanding of the services available across the Council and encourage managers to explore leadership through multiple perspectives.

The programme continues to emphasise compassionate and authentic leadership, with a strong focus on building psychological safety within teams.

Integrated Transport Service

Families of learners with additional learning needs now complete an e-form before transport starts, helping contractors understand each child's needs and improve their travel experience.

Independent travel training continues to expand working collaboratively with the Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS) and the Transition Team within Community Care and Children's Services to provide independent travel training to assist people of all ages, abilities and needs that do not have road safety awareness or of travelling unaccompanied on public transport. 27 learners have been supported so far, helping them move from taxi transport to public transport where possible.

Leisure Services

Staff induction now includes an element of site-specific safeguarding, EDI and dignity at work awareness. This means all staff understand their responsibilities before they complete any further Council training.

Our Leisure for Life scheme includes membership options designed for under-represented groups. At present, 282 serving and reserve Armed Forces personnel receive free memberships, and 22 veterans receive a discounted corporate membership.

Our Sports Development plan is focussed primarily on an assessment of EDI priorities. Within RCT these are socio-economic disadvantage, disability and women, as these areas have the lowest physical activity participation levels.

Case Study

MyRounders leagues offer men and women aged 16+ an opportunity to come together to enjoy and play social rounders. The MyRounders founder Julie set up the first league in South West Wales in 2022. She was new to the area having moved from England just before COVID lockdown and wanted to meet people through sport. Just 2 1/2 years later MyRounders have 6000 registered players, 26 leagues running over 16 venues, and over 100 trained umpires.

Julie was keen to establish a league in RCT and she began talking to Rebecca (a Rhondda resident that was playing in the Neath league). They pulled together a plan and with some financial support from us, 3 taster sessions were organised in October 2024. The taster sessions went really well and soon the league had 6 teams ready to play. The new Rhondda women's league officially started on the 7th of November 2024. Players can join the league with a group of friends as a team or join as an individual. Once the league was established Rebecca started a weekly training session open to players from all teams. Our community support fund helped to cover the initial facility hire and we also provided start up equipment. The sessions are a great opportunity for the teams to train and play together, outside of the competitive league format. An average of 25 women attend each week.

112 women currently take part in the league and 21% of these were inactive before joining. They told us that the rounders appealed to them because of the fun, social and inclusive nature of the sessions .

For more great outcomes please see [Sport RCT Impact Report 2024-2025](#).

Licensing Department

Concerns from the Disability Forum about accessible taxis led to disability-awareness training for 132 taxi drivers. We also provided anti-racism and sexism training as part of the same training. The Disabled Staff Network Chair contributed to these sessions. The Licensing Team is now exploring options for licensed taxis to have transfer boards for disabled passengers.

Prosperity and Development

This service area uses Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) as a key tool to help shape inclusive policies and guide decision-making. For example, the Aberdare Town Centre Strategy was developed following extensive engagement with the public, stakeholder organisations and local community groups. EIAs and Welsh Language Impact Assessments were carried out to ensure the strategy considered the needs of Welsh speakers, disabled people and those facing socio-economic

disadvantage. This approach will now be used for other Town Centre strategies to support consistent and inclusive planning

Our new [Housing Strategy \(2024-2030\)](#) explicitly outlines how we will ensure equal access to safe, warm, and affordable housing, with a particular focus on age and disability. This includes developing ‘homes for life’ standards to allow residents to remain in their homes as their mobility needs change over time.

6. Equality Objectives

Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028

Our new [Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028](#) was agreed by Cabinet in March 2024 and sets out 3 Equality Objectives and underpinning priorities.

Our Equality Objectives are:

1. We will embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into every aspect of service delivery.
2. We will attract applicants that represent the diversity of our communities, enriching our organisational capability to meet our ambitions.
3. We will respect, value and listen to all our employees by embedding a culture of inclusion.

These equality objectives directly align to the Corporate Plan’s vision for RCT, specifically an ‘inclusive County Borough’.

To ensure our equality objectives were evidence-based, we engaged with residents and staff through face-to-face meetings, focus groups, surveys, managers’ briefings and online sessions, alongside analysing community and workforce data. This approach meant our objectives reflected not only wider societal issues and trends but also the regional issues that matter most to our residents and workforce.

We also set up an online ‘Let’s Talk Equalities’ conversation and ideas board, which allowed people to share open suggestions and comment on others’ ideas. The online engagement was promoted widely, including through direct contact with equality organisations and posters displayed in community venues. We also held direct engagement sessions with groups such as the Disability Forum, Valleys Veterans, Taff Ely Veterans, Innovate, and the Valleys Ethnic Minority Support Group.

Feedback from staff highlighted that while most colleagues feel the Council is a good place to work, we still have work to do to build a consistently inclusive and positive

organisational culture. Some staff reported experiencing inappropriate language and behaviours in the workplace, showing that further action is needed.

Progress on Equality Objectives

Below is an overview of how we continued to meet the equality objectives contained in the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

<p>Objective 1 We will embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into every aspect of our service delivery.</p>
<p>Action 1 Establish an EDI Steering Group to oversee the delivery and monitoring of the Strategic Equality Plan.</p> <p>Target date for completion: September 2024</p>
<p>What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?</p> <p>The EDI Steering Group has now been set up and its terms of reference agreed. The group will meet twice a year to monitor progress on the Strategic Equality Plan. The first meeting took place in March 2025 after two unavoidable delays. The group is chaired by the Deputy Leader and includes Senior Leadership Team Diversity Champions, Staff Network Chairs, service area EDI leads and officers from the Diversity and Inclusion team. While it is too early to determine the effectiveness of this Group in the monitoring of the SEP, an early indication is the Group is successful in sharing lived and workplace experiences of different groups of staff.</p>
<p>Have there been any challenges?</p> <p>Progress has been slower than planned due to unavoidable delays, however, the group has now been established.</p>
<p>To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?</p> <p>Good progress has been made. Membership and effectiveness of the group will be reviewed regularly.</p>
<p>Action 2 Incorporate WG Anti-Racist Action Plan into Service Delivery Plans Target date for completion: April 25</p>

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The Welsh Government published an updated Anti-Racism Action Plan in November 2024. While many actions apply directly to Welsh Government, several can be adopted by public bodies, especially in Education, the Arts and Social Care.

Adult Services and Children's Services have identified relevant actions from the plan and are incorporating them into their 2025-2026 service delivery plans. To strengthen cultural competence, senior managers and staff within Children's Services attended training delivered by Diverse Cymru. Their training needs assessment for 2025-2026 has prioritised cultural competence sessions for all practitioners, delivered through short team-based sessions and induction.

The Community Safety team also participated in the Diverse Cymru Cultural Competency Scheme and achieved a Silver Accreditation, recognising their strong and inclusive practice.

In Education and Inclusion, incidents of anti-racist behaviour reported by schools remain low. A focus group held in July 2024 helped identify further actions to support the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic working group and informed the 2024-2025 Anti-Racism action plan. In January 2025, a teacher joined the Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) team to lead anti-racism workstreams.

The Arts Service Manager is also undertaking anti-racism training with other arts organisations.

Council-wide, mandatory race awareness e-learning has been introduced, supported by Equality Clinics on topics such as microaggressions, inclusive leadership and inclusive language. The Spotlight staff network has also strengthened its role with the appointment of a new Chair, and the network is supported by its Senior Diversity Champion.

Have there been any challenges?

We had initially planned to develop a single Council-wide anti-racist action plan, but this proved challenging because service areas have different priorities. As a result actions have been developed locally, which means not all parts of the Council are fully engaged with this work.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

We are demonstrating progress across the priority areas identified within the Welsh Government's Anti-Racist Action Plan, and it is encouraging that anti-racism is now firmly embedded as a consistent topic of discussion across many parts of the organisation.

Action 3
Incorporate the Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan into Service Delivery Plans

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

Whilst many elements of the Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan are specific to the Welsh Government, we are able to adopt areas that enhance inclusion and support participation in all aspects of life.

We have continued our membership with Stonewall, as we believe it is important to have access to resources that support our *LGBTQIA+ staff.

We promote LGBT History Month to raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ experiences.

As part of [Proud Councils](#), we have attended several Pride events across South Wales, with a strong and visible presence at Pride Cymru.

Our long-established LGBTQIA+ network, Perthyn, continues to meet regularly. Members have not raised any workplace concerns, and the network is supported by its Senior Diversity Champion.

Our [Diversity Pledge](#) encourages and enables people from underrepresented groups to stand for office through mentoring and shadowing opportunities, as well as information and learning events for those interested in becoming candidates.

Served and Proud LGBTQ+ Veterans Support Group is a joint initiative between Rhondda Cynon Taf and Cardiff Council continues to grow, with membership now at 16. Armed Forces Liaison Officers are actively promoting the group to reach veterans affected by the historic ban. Many members recently contributed evidence to the LGBT Veterans Independent Review, helping to build a clearer understanding of their experiences and the impacts they faced.

Members of the Served and Proud group also took part in the Pride Cymru parade in Cardiff alongside Fighting With Pride, honouring and celebrating LGBTQ+ veterans, and raising awareness to help challenge stigma and bias in society.

***LGBTQIA+**

Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, + all other identities not explicitly listed but part of the wider LGBTQIA+ community.

Note - LGBTQIA+ organisations and groups often adopt specific identities within the acronym, choosing terms that best reflect their community, focus, or lived experiences.

Have there been any challenges?

An ongoing challenge is providing schools with clear and comprehensive guidance for supporting gender-questioning and trans learners. Welsh Government guidance in this area has been delayed for some time, which continues to create uncertainty for school staff and learners.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Progress is encouraging and the Council continues to have a positive culture of LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Action 4

Review and improve communication methods to residents ensuring accessible versions such as BSL, Easy Read and non-digital formats.

Target date for completion: April 26

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The Business and Digital teams are enhancing public participation by introducing online registration for speaking or asking questions at Council meetings, alongside developing a 'Welcome to Llys Cadwyn' video to help residents feel more confident when attending in person. We also continue to expand accessible engagement options through freepost responses, a dedicated telephone line, and improved face-to-face outreach. Regular involvement with the 10 Neighbourhood Networks ensures information is shared widely within communities, with feedback from residents remaining consistently positive.

Adult Services worked with Wales Council for the Deaf to produce a BSL video to support consultation materials, strengthening our understanding of the communication needs and preferences of the Deaf community. This work also broadened our awareness of how the Welsh Language Active Offer can be delivered beyond written formats and informed further discussions with the Welsh Language Unit on improving accessibility.

A range of accessible formats have been developed for housing grant applications including online forms, hard-copy versions, telephone support and face-to-face home visits ensuring no applicant is disadvantaged by digital exclusion or accessibility need.

We continued to improve the accessibility of our engagement and consultation activities by increasing the use of Easy Read, Plain English/Welsh and other alternative formats. In 2024, we renewed our Photosymbols licence, enabling us to produce Easy Read and plain language materials in-house, including for the Annual Budget Survey, the Involvement and Engagement Strategy and the Residential Care consultation. This commitment to accessible communication will be embedded within the new Involvement Strategy.

Have there been any challenges?

The digital world is evolving so quickly that it can be difficult to maintain non-digital options. However, our Digital Improvement Office plays an important role in reminding our services areas to consider whether digital interventions are always the best choice.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Positive progress has been made in respect of engagement activity; however, this needs to be further embedded across all service areas.

Action 5

Establish a governance process monitoring Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) actions

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

No progress to date due conflicting priorities.

Have there been any challenges?
N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 6 Establish service area EDI working groups
Target date for completion: April 25
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
Leisure Services have established an EDI working group that shares good practice, supports policy interpretation and strengthens equality impact assessments across its sites. Engagement from other service areas has been limited to date, but work to encourage wider participation continues.
Have there been any challenges?
Despite our efforts to encourage participation, engagement has been lower than hoped. We need to understand the barriers to participation e.g. lack of interest, workload etc.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Slow progress.
Action 7 Monitor the inclusion of EDI actions Service Delivery Plans
Target date for completion: April 25
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
None. Service Delivery Plans will be reviewed in the 2025-2026 financial year, allowing service areas time to consider appropriate actions linked to the SEP.

Have there been any challenges?

N/A

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

N/A

**Action 8
Monitor engagement and consultation activity**

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

During the year, we supported or managed more than 80 consultation and engagement activities, analysing over 17,000 responses. This is an increase of around 6,000 from the previous year. This is in addition to more than 1,200 residents who engaged via the Let's Talk platform.

Division	Service Area	Number of Consultations	Snap Surveys	Number of Responses
Chief Executive	Corporate Estates	0	0	0
	Human Resources	17	17	976
	Legal & Democratic Services	4	3	89
	Prosperity & Development	6	4	867
TOTAL		27	24	1932
Education & Inclusion Services	Education and Inclusion Services	19	19	4860
TOTAL		19	19	4860
Finance, Digital & Frontline Services	Finance and Improvement Services	6	6	672
	Highways, Streetcare & Transportation Services	3	2	184
TOTAL		9	8	856

Community & Children's Services	Public Health Protection & Community Services	51	48	8089
	Social Services	22	20	1646
TOTAL		73	68	9735
TOTAL		128	119	17383

Note: these figures do not include those we engaged with via our face-to-face methods.

Have there been any challenges?

We don't have complete demographic information for our respondents. Equality monitoring data is collected but optional, and responses can be skewed when one demographic is over-represented.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

We've made significant improvements to our digital systems to enhance recording, and work in this area is ongoing.

**Action 9
Monitoring the use of equality monitoring toolkit**

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

Although progress was delayed due to limited resources, a survey to assess toolkit use has now been developed. It will be rolled out to managers and targeted groups, including those who have attended lunch-and-learn sessions or requested the forms and toolkit.

Have there been any challenges?

Limited resources have been a challenge to making progress on this action.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Progress has been made albeit delayed, and a survey to assess the use of the toolkit will now be rolled out to managers and targeted groups.

Objective 2

We will attract applicants that represent the diversity of our communities, enriching our organisational capability to meet our ambitions

Action 1

Campaign to improve uptake of employees inputting their equality data into iTrent

Target date for completion: April 26

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

To address gaps in workforce monitoring data, HR and Payroll have transferred over 20,000 fields of protected characteristic data from the previous Vision system into iTrent, increasing completion rates from 36% to up to 89% in some categories. The Employee Self Service (ESS) module is also being rolled out to all 10,400 staff, enabling individuals to update their own information. Over 6,000 additional ESS accounts have already been created for non-IT users, with work underway to complete the remaining accounts for staff who currently receive paper payslips.

Have there been any challenges?

Around 600 employees who do not have IT access or personal email accounts still need to be set up on ESS.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Progress is positive, but we still have work to do to encourage staff to use ESS to update their sensitive data.

Action 2

Review our Recruitment and Selection policy and processes to ensure we meet our commitment to DWP's Disability Confident Scheme.

Target date for completion: April 26

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

We have commissioned Business in the Community (BITC) to undertake a recruitment review, recognising the value of external expertise in strengthening this work. The review began in February 2025 and is being carried out through an EDI lens.

Have there been any challenges?

N/A

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 3 Review our Recruitment and Selection policy – marketing, job description design on onboarding process to ensure they are free of bias and promote the benefits of working for the Council.
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
The recruitment review undertaken by BITC will directly inform this work.
Have there been any challenges?
N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 4 Produce recruitment guidance for managers on avoiding bias in the recruitment process
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
The recruitment review undertaken by BITC will directly inform this work.
Have there been any challenges?
N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A

Action 5
Provide training to recruiting managers on potential bias in recruitment processes

Target date for completion: April 28

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The recruitment review undertaken by BITC will directly inform this work.

Have there been any challenges?

N/A

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

N/A

Action 6
Provide meaningful job opportunities for young people through our Apprenticeship/Graduate/Care to Work programmes

Target date for completion: April 26

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

- 20 apprentices and 20 graduates began employment with the Council in 2024-2025.
- Gateway to Employment: 4 young people are on placement within Council services, with a further 2 placed with local RCT businesses.
- 3 Construction Skills Certificate Scheme courses were delivered for Children Looked After.
- Step in the Right Direction: 5 trainees started in September 2024, with 11 participants now on programme and another intake planned for March 2025.
- Green Light Project: All 17 secondary schools participated, leading to 204 Year 11 learners being referred in September 2024.
- 117 Children Looked After engaged in the Care2Work programme.

Have there been any challenges?

The recruitment process is resource-intensive, and current digital systems are not as efficient as they could be. A significant amount of time is spent reviewing and rewriting job descriptions.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Positive progress and commitment to the Apprentice and Graduate programmes are embedded in the Council's priorities
Action 7 Develop induction programmes that are inclusive, recognising different backgrounds and experiences.
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
The Corporate Induction now includes dedicated content on Diversity & Inclusion and the Welsh Language, alongside newly introduced videos addressing climate change and the Council's net zero targets. This year Corporate Induction has been delivered to 264 new starters. Working is continuing to improve inclusivity.
Have there been any challenges?
Limited resources have been a challenge. We moved induction from Teams to face-to-face sessions in the Council Chambers, but the layout made it difficult to engage, build networks, and offer refreshments.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Working is continuing to improve inclusivity with more work scheduled for 2025-2026.
Action 8 Offer coaching and mentoring initiatives for under-represented groups in the workforce
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
This action has not yet commenced.
Have there been any challenges?

N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 9 Monitor career progression for staff by protected characteristic Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
No progress to date. Work will commence in 2025-2026.
Have there been any challenges?
N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Objective 3 We will respect, value and listen to our all our employees by embedding a culture of inclusion.
Action 1 Roll out a programme of mandatory training across the organisation covering all protected characteristics Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
Nine mandatory EDI learning modules have been launched on our digital platform, RCT Source. This applies to 3,396 mainly office-based staff and managers. They have nine months to complete the modules, with the deadline in September 2025. By the end of the 2024-2025 financial year, 35% of this group had completed all modules.

The Keeping People Safe training, which includes sexual harassment awareness, has also been rolled out via RCT Source. Of the 3,383 staff enrolled, 51% had completed the course by the end of the 2025 financial year.

The Diversity and Inclusion team has delivered face-to-face training for frontline staff. By the end of the 2025 financial year, 489 frontline staff had attended these sessions.

Have there been any challenges?

There are ongoing challenges in organising and delivering training for frontline staff. Services struggle to release staff because their roles must be covered, and suitable venues are limited. Attendance can be low due to sickness or urgent operational issues. Many service areas are also going through reorganisations, making it difficult for them to commit staff to training sessions.

In a small number of cases, some staff have shown challenging attitudes towards course content.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from our frontline staff. Examples include:

“I’m going to benefit immensely from this training. I’m going to act on it daily. The trainer was amazing and very knowledgeable” - participant Residential Care

“It has benefitted me by understanding more about things I’m entitled to and how to act in the workplace” - participant Waste/Cleansing/Parks teams

“Today has helped me become more aware about my responsibility to be more compassionate. Thanks [trainer] I appreciate your self awareness and care” - participant Leisure

Action 2

Communicate a zero-tolerance approach to bullying harassment

Target date for completion: September 2024

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The Senior Leadership Team strengthened their commitment to EDI while developing the 2024-2028 Strategic Equality Plan, including a clear zero-tolerance approach.

In spring 2024, managers' briefings highlighted these values and the zero-tolerance message as key aims of the new SEP.

Consistent messages have been shared across the organisation through managers' briefings, the staff newsletter, the staff Facebook page, our internal platform Inform and global emails.

The updated Basic Rules document, which sets out expected workplace behaviours, has been shared on global emails and in the Staff Newsletter, referenced in EDI face-to-face training, and given to new starters.

Some service areas have also been proactive in raising awareness, for example within Prosperity and Development.

Have there been any challenges?

Given the scale of the Council and the wide range of services it delivers, ensuring that the zero-tolerance message is communicated effectively across all service areas remains an ongoing challenge. It is essential that all managers have a clear understanding of behaviours that may be perceived as inappropriate and that the Council's expectations are applied consistently across the organisation.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Good progress, however, momentum need to be retained. This work will also feed into the upcoming review of the Dignity at Work policy.

**Action 3
Deliver monthly on-line EDI and reflective sessions for staff and managers**

Target date for completion: Ongoing

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The Diversity and Inclusion team facilitated monthly sessions as follows:

Equality Clinic Title	Date	Participants
Reasonable Adjustments	23 April 2024	81

Reasonable Adjustments	15 May 2024	21
Let's Talk...Microaggressions	26 June 2024	31
Let's Talk...Microaggressions	24 July 2024	15
Reasonable Adjustments	18 September 2024	39
Developing Inclusive Leaders	23 October 2024	36
Working Carers (Delivered by CarersWales)	21 November 2024	47
Let's Talk ... EDI Language	22 January 2025	30
Supporting Working Carers (Delivered by CarersWales)	3 sessions during February 2025	54
Let's Talk ... EDI Language	22 January 2025	30
Let's Talk ... EDI Language	19 February 2025	19
Say It Clear	19 March 2025	27

In addition to the above activity, awareness has also been raised through managers' briefings, where sessions on an Inclusive Workplace, Working Carers and Sexual Harassment have been delivered. Feedback from participants has been positive. The Working Carers session, in particular, had a notable impact, leading to an increase in staff seeking further information from both the Carers Network and the D&I team. This increase has also been reflected in additional enquiries received by the HR team.

Have there been any challenges?

Raising awareness of the sessions remains a challenge. As attendance to Equality Clinics is voluntary, they often attract only those already interested, meaning we are not reaching some staff, particularly managers who might benefit most.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

We are working to shift organisational culture, which is always difficult to measure. However, the feedback received so far shows that we are moving in the right direction. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from Equality Clinic attendees. Examples include:

“ Thank you, it was an informative and interactive session, and I did learn new things and also found myself realising some of the incorrect things I have previously said or witnessed without challenging it.” – participant Let's Talk Microaggressions

"I really found it a powerful session and very helpful in discussing the topics and also the wider awareness raising of 'impact rather than intention' which made me reflect on a number of equality issues and my personal and professional interactions" - participant Let's Talk Microaggressions

"Really informative and have been thinking a lot about modelling EDI as a manager and how to build on this going forward" – participant Inclusive Leadership

It is particularly impactful when participants highlight that they will be sharing the information with their wider teams or when it's encouraged them to seek support:

"... I'd like to raise some of the issues/content in a staff meeting to highlight to the team"

"liked the idea of having EDI on the agenda in meetings and making it part of the culture, not just a tick box exercise"

"thank you it's been very helpful and has encouraged me to speak to my manager". Participant Working Carers Workshop.

Action 4

Launch a revised Multi Cultural awareness resource

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

Work in this area has begun and officers are now collaborating with Spotlight, the staff network for racial equality, to develop the content.

Have there been any challenges?

N/A

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

The resource will be launched in 2025-2026.

Action 5

Support staff networks and safe spaces for to enable peer support of under-represented groups of staff.

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

We encourage staff to join our networks. All networks, except the Allies Network, have a Chair or Co-Chairs and agreed terms of reference. This year, the Disability and Carers Network separated to form two distinct networks. Our current networks are:

- **Allies** - for colleagues who want to support change
- **Carers** - for colleagues who are working carers
- **Disabled Staff Network** - for disabled colleagues
- **ND Network** - for neurodivergent colleagues
- **Perthyn** - for LGBTQIA+ colleagues
- **Spotlight** - for ethnic minority colleagues.

All networks (apart from Allies) aim to meet monthly, with a member of the Diversity and Inclusion team attending to offer advice and listen to members' experiences.

Chairs also contribute to wider organisational awareness by presenting at events, including:

- Spotlight Chair and members presenting to Elected Members on lived experience;
- Disabled Staff Network Chair delivering lived-experience input at taxi-driver training;
- ND Network Chair and members of the Network organising and presenting at a Neurodiversity Awareness event;
- Carers Network Chair presenting at Managers' Briefings.

This year, we introduced biannual Staff Network Chairs meetings. Chairs consistently report that networks provide strong peer support for their members.

Have there been any challenges?

Network membership is currently limited mainly to office-based staff due to communication barriers. Finding effective ways to engage frontline colleagues is a priority for all networks.

Some members have also reported that they are not always supported by their managers to take time to attend meetings. This is an issue that will need to be addressed.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Membership of the staff networks has grown, particularly within the Carers Network and the ND Network, following increased awareness and recent managers' briefing sessions. We will continue to raise the profile of all staff networks to encourage further membership

Action 6

Review reporting mechanisms for reporting identity based harassment

Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

The focus of work in this area has shifted due to recent legislative changes, specifically the new duty to prevent sexual harassment. A formal report has been presented to the Senior Leadership Team outlining the new legal requirement, effective from 26 October 2024, which obliges employers to take reasonable and proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment under the Worker Protection (Amendment of the Equality Act 2010). The report highlights the need to strengthen existing policies, deliver targeted training, assess organisational risk factors, and implement preventative measures addressing both internal and third-party harassment. It also outlines the potential consequences of non-compliance and recommends using the EHRC's technical guidance and eight-step framework to inform the Council's approach and support a safe, inclusive culture.

As a result, reviewing the Dignity at Work Policy has become a priority to ensure it meets new legislative requirements.

Findings from the Annual Survey Report were presented to the Senior Leadership team, and the recommendations were accepted. Work remains on track for the next survey, due in May 2025, which will include new questions on sexual harassment in line with corporate and legislative requirements.

Sexual harassment training has already been delivered as part of the mandatory Keeping People Safe module, with 51% completions to date. Managers' briefings have also taken place in November and December 2024, with 377 participants.

Have there been any challenges?

It is recognised that the Dignity at Work policy is closely linked to other HR policies, such as the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures. As a result, several related policies will also need to be reviewed to ensure a consistent and aligned approach, which will have an impact on delivery timelines.

To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?

Progress has been delayed due to recent legislative changes; however, this should now provide clearer direction on the actions required moving forward.

Action 7
Undertake a review of Reasonable Adjustment scheme and supporting processes

Target date for completion: April 26

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?

Eight Reasonable Adjustments focus groups held between 31 May and 17 June 2024, revealing significant gaps in awareness, understanding, and consistent use of the Council's Reasonable Adjustments Scheme among both staff and managers. Staff reported unclear processes, inaccessible documentation, inconsistent managerial responses, stigma, and barriers caused by language, culture, and lack of trust, while managers highlighted issues such as limited knowledge of the scheme, uncertainty about initiating sensitive conversations, confusion around eligibility, and major constraints caused by budget limitations and the absence of centralised systems for recording and requesting adjustments. Both groups expressed a strong need for clearer responsibilities, better training, improved access to support services, and centralised tools or portals to streamline adjustments, improve transparency, and reduce inconsistency across the organisation.

The Senior Diversity Champion for Disability is supporting this work and is chairing the Task and Finish Group. An action plan is already in place.

Following the focus groups, we delivered:

- Two reasonable adjustment sessions attended by just over 100 people.
- Manager briefings titled "Reasonable Adjustments – Where Are We Now?" in September 2024, attended by 393 managers.

A mandatory training module on reasonable adjustments has now been launched, and reasonable adjustments are also included in the mandatory training for front-line staff.

Have there been any challenges?

We do not currently have a reliable digital system to record where reasonable adjustments are in place. While we know some staff experience challenges when arranging adjustments, we also know anecdotally that many colleagues have very positive experiences, and that adjustments are often put in place routinely.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Despite previously holding numerous awareness sessions on reasonable adjustments, particularly for managers, much of the information has not been retained. In practice, the scheme only becomes relevant when someone needs to use it. This will be an important consideration when designing training for the new policy and process.
Action 8 Review HR policies ensuring they are free of bias
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
Work in this area has begun and a HR policy group is being developed to review this area of work.
Have there been any challenges?
All participants being able to recognise the ways bias can appear within a policy document.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 9 Publish our Disability, Ethnicity and Gender Pay Gaps
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
Our Gender pay gap is 8.56%

We aim to report our Disability and Ethnicity pay gaps in the 2025-2026 Annual Equality Report.
Have there been any challenges?
N/A
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
N/A
Action 10 Commitment to the actions BITC's Race at Work Charter
Target date for completion: April 26
What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
<p>The BITC's Race at Work actions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint an Executive Sponsor for Race • Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress • Commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying • Make Clear that Supporting Equality is the Responsibility of All Leaders and Managers • Take Action that Support Ethnic Minority Carer Progression. <p>These actions have been embedded into the SEP. The Chief Executive is the Senior Diversity Champion for Race and supports the Spotlight staff network.</p>
Have there been any challenges?
Challenges have already been identified in previous points.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Positive progress has been made across all actions.
Action 11 Build reducing gender pay gap actions into the Workforce Development plan
Target date for completion: April 25

What progress has been made for this action in 2024-2025?
No progress has been made to date due to resource constraints.
Have there been any challenges?
The gender pay gap has reduced significantly over recent years, reflecting the proactive work included in previous Strategic Equality Plans. However, we are now reaching a point where further reductions are challenging, as many part-time roles remain gendered, for example, school catering posts.
To what extent are you content with the progress against this action over the lifetime of this SEP?
Although progress this year has been limited, the gender pay gap continues to narrow.

Overall Progress

Over the first year of delivering the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028, we have made good progress in building a more equal and inclusive organisation.

For Objective 1, we strengthened how we oversee equality work by setting up the new EDI Steering Group, improved the accessibility of our communications, and increased our involvement in national work such as the Anti-Racist Action Plan and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan. Although some areas experienced delays, many services are now putting equality into their day-to-day work, helped by better consultation activity and more inclusive ways of engaging with residents.

For Objective 2, we improved the quality of our workforce equality data through updates to iTrent and the rollout of Employee Self Service. We also began an external review of our recruitment practices to help reduce bias and improve fairness. Alongside this, we expanded opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, graduate placements and programmes supporting care-experienced young people. This has laid strong foundations for making our recruitment and progression routes more inclusive.

For Objective 3, we strengthened our organisational culture by introducing mandatory EDI learning, providing face-to-face training for frontline staff, and increasing communication about our zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. Our staff networks also grew in visibility and membership, providing peer support and valuable lived-experience insight. Work on improving reasonable

adjustments has helped us better understand what support staff need and has led to new training, clearer guidance and an action plan to improve consistency.

Overall, the Council is moving in the right direction. While some work will continue into future years, the progress made so far shows a strong commitment to fairness, inclusion and meeting our equality duties. This work supports our wider aim of improving outcomes for residents and helping to build a more equal Wales.

7. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's)

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 service delivery 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 table below includes a snapshot of EIA's carried out in financial year 2024-2025.

Equality Impact Assessments

Draft Adult Social Care Strategy 2024–2030	September 2024
Proposal to Close Rhigos Primary School with Pupils Transferring to Hirwaun Primary School	April 2024
Standardisation of the Council's Waste Collection Arrangements (including Revisions to Trade and Green Collection Arrangements)	July 2024
Council Tax Premiums – Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes	July 2024
Residential Care Homes for Older People (Care Accommodation Update & Consultation)	September 2024

Proposed Local Area Energy Plan	September 2024
Corporate Asset Management Plan (2024-2030)	October 2024
Heritage Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf 2024–2030	November 2024
Residential Care Homes for Older People (Consultation Outcomes: Ferndale House & Caeglas)	January 2025
RCT Housing Strategy: ‘Prosperous Homes, Prosperous Lives (2024–2030)’	February 2025

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

<https://rctcbc.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=132&Year=0&LLL=0>

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 1 - Employment Monitoring Data.

The Gender Pay Gap

March 2025

	Combined	Full Time	Part Time
All Employees	8.56%	-9.77%	2.08%
Non Teaching	9.38%	-8.23%	2.29%
Teaching	4.83%	4.47%	-0.85%

The gender pay gap for all employees has reduced from 8.85% to 8.56%. The main reason for this was the 2024-2025 pay award for NJC employees of an increase of £1290 (pro rata) on all grades. This had a more positive impact for employees on the lower grades and as the lower grades are occupied predominantly by female staff the gender pay gap decreased.

This is not as big a decrease as last year mainly because the pay award had reduced from previous years and also the impact of the payment on the lower grades has also reduced. For example, the £1925 pay award for 2023-2024 had an impact of a 9.4% increase on the lowest grade GR1 whilst the £1290 pay award for 2024-2025 had an impact of 5.8% on GR1.

The average hourly rate for all female employees has increased by 8.8% from £16.79 to £18.27 whereas the hourly rate for all male employees has increased by 8.4% from £18.42 to £19.98

March 2024

	Combined	Full Time	Part Time
All Employees	8.85%	-8.70%	5.54%
Non Teaching	10.47%	-7.94%	3.38%
Teaching	3.46%	3.62%	0.35%

March 2023

	Combined	Full Time	Part Time
All Employees	9.49%	-10.54%	3.75%
Non Teaching	10.50%	-9.02%	2.67%
Teaching	4.71%	4.15%	7.50%

March 2022

	Combined	Full Time	Part Time
All Employees	10.24%	-9.61%	3.63%
Non Teaching	11.68%	-8.96%	2.98%
Teaching	4.19%	3.91%	5.05%

9. Procurement

The Council operates the SPD (Single Procurement Document) which is part of the [National Procurement Website](#).

The SPD is a standard form, which replaces pre-qualification questionnaires, and should make the process of bidding for a public contract easier and contains a set of core questions commonly asked at the selection stage.

The SPD delivers a number of benefits:

- Increased efficiency for both suppliers and buyers, by allowing standard questions and 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-to-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.

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 deliver the equality objectives set out in our Strategic Equality Plan and monitor progress closely over the coming years. This includes working alongside service areas to help them embed equality, diversity and inclusion into everyday practice and supporting them to meet their responsibilities.

We will also carry on strengthening our approach to training by expanding mandatory learning, developing new resources, and providing more opportunities for staff and managers to build their confidence in equality matters. Our work with staff networks, managers and frontline teams will remain an important part of this.

Overall, we are committed to making steady, practical progress and ensuring that equality remains central to how we support our staff, and how we serve our communities.

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
Diversity and Inclusion Manager
Rhondda Cynon Taf Council
Ty Elai
Dinas Isaf East 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 (itrent). The information is requested at the recruitment stage and entered on to their record at that point.

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 79% of employees live in the Council area.

EQUALITY MONITORING DATA FOR THE YEAR 2024-2025

Gender

The table below shows the gender breakdown of employees:

Gender	Total	% of Workforce
Male	2650	26.2%
Female	7469	73.8%
Total	10119	

This table clearly indicates that women make up the majority of the Council workforce, this has been consistent for a number of years.

Age

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

Age Group	Total	% of Workforce
16-24	783	7.7%
25-34	1856	18.3%
35-44	2488	24.6%
45-54	2708	26.8%
55-64	1988	19.6%
65+	296	2.9%
Total	10119	

This table indicates, as the figures did last year, that over half of Council employees are within the age range of 35-54.

Disability

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

Identification	Total	% of Workforce
Disabled	273	2.7%
Non-Disabled	8707	86.0%
Information not held	1139	11.3%
Total	10119	

Information is held on 89% 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.

National Identity and Ethnicity

The table below shows the breakdown of employees by ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Number of Employees
Asian Bangladeshi	2
Asian British	3
Asian Chinese	14
Asian Indian	11
Asian Other (Please State Below)	9
Asian Pakistani	2
Asian Welsh	3
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	1
Black African	27
Black British	2
Black Welsh	1
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Any other	1
Black/Black British - African	6
Gypsy / Romany / Irish Traveller	1
Mixed Other (Please State Below)	13
Mixed White & Asian	10
Mixed White & Black African	4

Mixed White & Black Caribbean	10
Other ethnic group	12
Prefer not to say	16
White - Any other	3462
White - British	2615
White - Cornish	4
White - English	74
White - Gypsy or Traveller	1
White - Irish	15
White - Northern Irish	3
White - Scottish	8
White - Welsh	2569
Information not held	1220
Total	10119

Information is held on 88% of the workforce. Staff identifying themselves as an ethnic minority other than White is 1.4% of the workforce. This is not representative of people living in RCT as the [Census 2021](#) highlighted the ethnic population of RCT as:

96.7% of people identified as White.

1.5% identified as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh.

1.0% identified as from Mixed or multiple ethnic groups.

0.4% identified as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African.

0.3% identified themselves as from other ethnic groups.

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

National Identity	Number of Employees
African	2
American	1
Bangladeshi	3
British (not Channel Islands or IOM)	1960
British Virgin Islands	1
Chinese/Tibetan	8
Croatian	1
Dutch	2
English	178
European	9
French	2
German	1
Greek	1
Indian	7

Irish	18
New Zealander	1
Nigeria	14
Northern Ireland	3
Norwegian	1
Polish	7
Portuguese	2
Romanian	4
Scottish	19
South African	1
Spanish	2
Sri Lankan	6
Thai	1
Ukrainian	4
United Arab Emirates	1
Welsh	4643
Zimbabwean	2
Information not held	3214
Grand Total	10119

Information is held on 69% 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	2684
Buddhist	18
Hindu	4
Jewish	2
Muslim	16
Sikh	2
Other	110
% of workforce identifying with a religion	28.0%
No Religion	3895
Prefer not to say	346
Information not held	3042
Total	10119

Information is held on 70% of employees.

Sexual Orientation

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

Sexual Orientation	Total
Heterosexual	4814
Gay Man	53
Gay Woman/Lesbian	62
Bisexual	60
% of workforce identifying a sexual orientation	49.3%
Prefer not to say	233
Information not held	4897
Total	10119

Information is held on 52% of employees.

Pregnancy and Maternity

As at 31 March 2025 there were 112 employees on maternity leave. During the year 2024-2025, 270 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 2025 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
Administrator	924	271	1195
Ancillary	1193	435	1628
Assistant Headteacher	41	29	70
Community and Social Care	1072	226	1298
Deputy Headteacher	79	37	116
Frontline and Customer Care	391	302	693
Headteacher	92	45	137
Middle Manager	191	97	288
School Support	1495	81	1576

Skilled Manual Worker	47	105	152
Strategic Manager	36	38	74
Supervisor	109	181	290
Teacher	1237	373	1610
Technical, Specialist & Professional	523	414	937
Unqualified Teacher	39	16	55
Total	7469	2650	10119

As last year, the data provides very few surprises with the majority of women working in 'traditional' female areas, particularly in the Community & Social Care, Ancillary and School Support settings; 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 2025

- Chief Officers (Head of Service and above)
- National Joint Council for Local Government Services
- Soulbury (including Heads of Service)
- Teachers/Education

The tables below set out the breakdown of employees by gender and grade:

Employees by Gender & Grade – Chief Officers

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Chief Executive	0	1	1
Deputy Chief Executive & Group Director	0	1	1
Director Level 1	2	5	7
Director Level 2	2	1	3
Service Director Level 1	1	3	4
Service Director Level 2	3	7	10
Head of Service – Soulbury	4	2	6
Head of Service Level 1	12	6	18
Head of Service Level 2	8	8	16
Total	32	34	66

There has been no significant change since the previous year, whereby the majority of Chief Officer posts are held by males. Those held by females are largely on the lower end of the Chief Officer grades.

Employees by Gender and Grade – National Joint Council

Grade	Female	Male	Total
GR1	227	53	280
GR2	693	32	725
GR3	345	106	451
GR4	745	267	1012
GR5	572	356	928
GR6	1096	268	1364
GR7	684	224	908
GR8	352	146	498
GR9	198	111	309
GR10	265	172	437
GR11	201	107	308
GR12	166	62	228
GR13	158	81	239
GR14	57	15	72
GR15	39	41	80
GR16	1	1	2
GR17	15	3	18
GR18	2	0	2
Total	5816	2045	7861

Employees by Gender and Grade – Teachers/Education

Grade	Female	Male	Total
Education Psychologists and Advisers	91	28	119
Leadership Group/Headteachers	83	43	126
Deputy & Assistant Headteachers	135	76	211
Teachers	1279	393	1672
Total	1588	540	2128

The figures above indicate that females make up 75% 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	2595	1855	4450
Permanent Full Time Term Time	138	20	158
Permanent Part Time	1113	184	1297
Permanent Part Time Term Time	2106	93	2199
Temporary Full Time	384	170	554
Temporary Full Time Term Time	14	1	15
Temporary Part Time	92	26	118
Temporary Part Time Term Time	437	41	478
Casual	590	260	850
Grand Total	7469	2650	10119

For permanent members of staff the breakdown of female/male is comparable to the overall workforce. Although 73.8% 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 542 vacancies advertised during the year 2024-2025. 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
Disabled	613	244	48
Female	4771	1431	545
LGB	449	142	46
Male	2080	699	200
Minority Ethnic	665	246	30

Leaving Employment

Information gained from the iTrent System shows that a total of 1218 employees left the employment of the Council in 2024-2025, which included 36 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 2024-25.

Reasons for Leaving by Gender

Reason for Leaving	Female	Male	Total
Age Retirement	16	7	23
Death in Service	7	4	11
Dismissed	3	8	11
Early Retirement (Teachers)	6	2	8
End of Contract	83	52	135
Failed Probationary Period	1	1	2
Ill Health	8	4	12
Mutual Agreement	102	35	137
Redundant	31	5	36
Transfer to another Council	19	2	21
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	66	0	66
Voluntary	472	133	605
Voluntary early retirement and redundancy	76	30	106
Voluntary redundancy	36	8	44
Total	926	291	1217

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	12	11	23
Death in Service	0	0	0	2	8	1	11
Dismissed	0	3	2	1	4	1	11
Early retirement (Teachers)	0	0	0	0	8	0	8
End of Contract	32	54	27	9	9	4	135
Failed probationary period	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Ill health					8	4	12
Mutual agreement	1	11	14	24	49	38	137
Redundant		3	3	15	15		36
Transfer to another Council	0	7	10	4	0	0	21
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	1	6	7	13	30	9	66

Voluntary	40	146	131	110	100	78	605
VER + Redundancy	0	0	0	0	72	34	106
Voluntary Redundancy	1	3	13	22	5	0	44
Total	76	233	207	201	320	180	1217

Reason for Leaving by Disability

Reason for Leaving	Total
Death In Service	2
End of Contract	13
Failed Probationary Period	1
Mutual Agreement	7
Voluntary Termination	17
Voluntary Early Retirement + Redundancy	2
Total	42

Reason for Leaving by Ethnicity

Reason	White	Ethnic Minority	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	4	0	19	23
Death in service	5	0	6	11
Dismissed	4	0	7	11
Early retirement (Teachers)	1	0	7	8
End of contract	97	1	37	135
Failed probationary period	2	0	0	2
Ill health	2	0	10	12
Mutual agreement	46	0	91	137
Redundant	2	0	34	36
Transfer to another Council	6	1	14	21
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	10	2	54	66
Voluntary	297	29	279	605
VER + Redundancy	29	0	77	106
Voluntary Redundancy	7	0	37	44
Total	512	33	672	1217

Reason for Leaving by Religion or Belief

Reason	Buddhist	Christian	Muslim	No Religion	Other	Prefer Not To Say	Not Known	Total
Age Retirement	0	1	0	3	0	0	19	23
Death in Service	0	3	0	1	0	0	7	11
Dismissed	0	1	0	1	0	1	8	11
Early retirement (teachers)	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	8
End of contract	0	27	0	63	1	8	36	135
Failed probationary period	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Ill health	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	12
Mutual agreement	1	16	0	17	1	2	100	137
Redundant	0	1	0	1	0	0	34	36
Transfer to another Council	0	4	0	3	0	1	13	21
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	1	5	0	4	0	2	54	66
Voluntary		103	6	190	2	17	287	605
VER + Redundancy	0	10	0	14	0	2	80	106
Voluntary Redundancy	0	3	0	3	0	0	38	44
Total	2	176	6	302	4	33	694	1217

Reason for Leaving by Sexual Orientation

Reason	Hetero- sexual	Gay/ Lesbian	Bi- sexual	Prefer not to say	Not Known	Total
Age retirement	3	0	0	0	20	23
Death in service	4	0	0	0	7	11
Dismissed	3	0	0	0	8	11
Early retirement (Teachers)	1	0	0	0	7	8
End of contract	33	1	1	5	95	135
Failed probationary period	1	0	1	0	0	2
Ill health	1	0	0	0	11	12
Mutual agreement	26	1	3	2	105	137
Redundant	0	0	0	0	36	36
Transfer to another Council	3	0	0	0	18	21
Tupe Transfer to Outside Organisation	10	0	0	1	55	66
Voluntary	207	8	5	15	370	605
VER + Redundancy	19	1	0	1	85	106
Voluntary Redundancy	5	1	0	0	38	44
Total	316	12	10	24	855	1217

Training

Identification of the need for training, learning and development is carried out through the Council's working planning arrangement and Individual Performance Review (IPR).

During IPR meetings managers will discuss with employees their training, learning and development needs which are aligned to the performance review and job competencies. The results of this feed into a departmental 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.

Disciplinary, Grievance and Dignity at Work

Disciplinary and Grievance cases are recorded and monitored through the iTrent System. There were a total of 229 cases covering disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work and disciplinary action resulting from sickness absence in 2024-2025. The tables below provide equality monitoring information for these cases:

Gender

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Male	103	72	24	2	5
Female	126	77	43	4	2
Total	229	149	67	6	7

Age

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
16 – 24	10	10	0	0	0
25 – 34	39	23	14	0	2
35 – 44	49	31	14	1	3
45 – 54	67	42	21	2	2
55 – 64	57	38	16	3	0
65+	7	5	2	0	0
Total	229	149	67	6	7

Disability

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Disabled	18	6	11	1	0
Non Disabled	176	116	50	5	5
Information not held	35	27	6	0	2
Total	229	149	67	6	7

Ethnicity

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Asian	1	0	0	1	0
Black	2	2	0	0	0
Mixed	1	1	0	0	0
White	193	122	61	5	5
Information not held	32	24	6	0	2
Total	229	149	67	6	7

Religion or Belief

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
No Religion	90	50	36	2	2
Christian	52	36	10	4	2
Muslim	1	1	0	0	0
Other	2	2	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	8	6	2	0	0
Information not held	76	54	19	0	3
Total	229	149	67	6	7

Sexual Orientation

	Total	Discipline	Sickness Absence	Grievance	Dignity at Work
Heterosexual	108	65	36	5	2
Gay/Lesbian	4	1	1	1	1
Bisexual	4	1	2	0	1
Prefer not to say	3	2	1	0	0
Information not held	110	80	27	0	3
Total	229	149	67	6	7