

Caerphilly County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan

Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2019-2020

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, regardless of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh, BSL or other language, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Published 31 March 2021

A greener place
Man gwyrddach



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Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg. Mae ar gael mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.
This publication is available in Welsh. It is available in other languages and formats on request.

Introduction

The council is required under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce an annual monitoring report on the steps it has taken to meet the public sector equality duty and its own Equality Objectives. Welsh Government was the first government to impose specific duties on public services over and above those required by the Act. The Act places a duty on public bodies to consider how to positively contribute to a fairer society through the delivery of services having due regard to eliminating discrimination.

Each section of this report looks at the council's progress during 2019-2020, with a number of case studies included to demonstrate the work that service areas have undertaken to ensure compliance and improving service delivery year on year.

The Council continues to work in partnership with other organisations, some of which are members of the Caerphilly Public Services Board. The Public Services Board brings public bodies together to work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Caerphilly County Borough, part of this is ensuring that the goal of a 'More Equal Wales' is met. Members, who come from the public, health, voluntary and private sectors, strive to be creative and innovative in delivering against their statutory duties.

A great deal of the Council's Equalities related information is already published in greater detail on the Equalities pages of the Council's website, where you can also download a pdf version of this report: www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

The Council remains committed to ensuring that everyone within the county borough of Caerphilly is treated with equal respect and that their individual circumstances are not a barrier to them receiving the services they need from the Council or its partners.

In order for this Equalities Annual Report to be properly considered, it was taken through an internal endorsement process via Cabinet on the 24 March 2021. The annual report will then published on the Council's website by 31 March 2021.

Cllr Philippa Marsden
Leader

Christina Harrhy
Chief Executive

Tackling Identity-Based Violence and Abuse

The Reporting and Monitoring of Discriminatory Bullying in Schools 2019-2020

The Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 contains a specific Equality Objective in relation to 'Tackling Identity-based Violence and Abuse'. The objective aims to reduce the levels of real or perceived instances of identity-based abuse, bullying, harassment and violence, hate crime and hate incidents in the county borough.

To measure this objective, we need to ensure that improved monitoring and reporting measures are in place. This will lead to more accurate recording and *may* result in an increase in the number of recorded incidents but that would be as a result of better awareness and recording.

Data is collected and reported in various ways to identify trends, target support and demonstrate that the Council and schools are complying with legal duties around these issues. For any data collected and reports published, anonymised totals are used, with only examples of good practice by individual schools, or those that have had bespoke training being specifically named at any time.

Discriminatory bullying is a matter of concern for every local authority, this report highlights that Caerphilly County Borough Council and its partners are actively monitoring the situation and tackling the issues by working with organisations to make positive progress each year. There are 87 education establishments that provide monitoring data to the Directorate of Education, a summary of the reported incidents are detailed in [Table 1](#):

[Table 1 – Table of Reported Incidents](#)

	Caring	Cultural	Disability	Gender	Homophobic	Language	Nationality	Race	Religion or Belief	Unknown	Term Total
Summer Term 2017-2018	2	-	-	1	12	-	-	24	4	1	43
Summer Term 2018-2019	-	1	2	2	9	1	-	16	2	-	33
Summer Term 2019-2020	-	1	2	2	9	-	1	16	2	1	34
Autumn Term 2017-2018	-	-	2	4	8	-	-	25	1	-	40
Autumn Term 2018-2019	-	2	1	1	9	-	4	21	1	-	39
Autumn Term 2019-2020	-	-	2	1	4	1	-	37	1	1	46
Spring Term 2017-2018	-	4	1	-	2	2	-	8	-	-	17
Spring Term 2018-2019	-	-	3	2	10	1	1	44	12	-	73
Spring Term 2019-2020	-	1	-	6	6	4	-	9	1	-	27

Bullying Survey 2019-2020

The Bullying Survey unfortunately was not repeated in 2019-2020 due to resources and other priorities.

Statutory Anti-bullying Guidance was published by Welsh Government at the end of November 2020. There is far more emphasis on identity based bullying in the new document and the Council's policy will be updated to reflect the new statutory guidance.

Transgender Toolkit

Focus groups to consult with young people on the toolkit had been scheduled to take place in April 2020 so their voices could be heard within the document, however due to the pandemic these sessions had to be cancelled. Officers are considering sending the draft toolkit out to consultation and hopefully be able to run the sessions with the young people at a later date.

Training for Schools and Young People settings

Schools in Caerphilly county borough receive training through the All Wales School Liaison Core Programme (AWSLCP) delivered by Gwent Police. These sessions cover subjects such as respect, bullying and diversity issues across primary and secondary schools in the county borough to the students.

The AWSLCP is an example of Partnership Working between the Welsh Government and the four Welsh Police Forces and consists of a series of Crime Prevention inputs / lesson deliveries and Supportive School Policing initiatives that aim to:

- educate children and young people about the harm substance misuse can cause to their health, their families and the wider community
- promote the principles of positive citizenship through the medium of education
- achieve a reduction in the levels of crime and disorder within our young communities.

All sessions will continue to be delivered by pre-booked appointment with a School Community Police Officer (SCPO). SCPOs provide a variety of Supportive School Policing (SSP) and safeguarding activities including the resolution of incidents using the School Crime Beat Policy and restorative approaches. SCPOs have also delivered a variety of age appropriate school assemblies.

It is anticipated that an enhanced safeguarding role will further develop links between the local and school communities as well as partner agencies e.g. Youth Offending Service, Safeguarding Services etc. This is particularly relevant to identity-based and discriminatory bullying where crimes may also have been committed.

The AWSLCP is fully supported by a dedicated website – [School Beat](#) which contains further information and guidance for teachers, pupils and parents.

During 2019-2020, 1,046 lessons were delivered generating 28,355 pupil contacts. 498 of the lessons delivered addressed bullying, diversity, respect or lack of respect and coercion to 10,148 pupils. The work also included the delivery of 32 assemblies to 6601 pupils.

The council's Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team has provided training for school staff and governors and has actively promoted events which raise awareness such as LGBT History Month, Black History Month etc.

Council staff are aware of partner agencies and are able to signpost and support schools and youth workers to access resources such as workshops and curriculum materials from agencies such as Umbrella Cymru, Stonewall Cymru, Show Racism the Red Card, Gwent Ethnic Minority Service (GEMS) etc.

The Council works with stakeholders (schools, youth service, young people, neighbouring authorities, partnership agencies etc.) to develop guidance reflecting changes to legal requirements or the needs of young people within the authority e.g. developing plans and policies in relation to changes in the Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) curriculum to address sexuality, health and relationships education and which explicitly refers to sexuality and gender, in age appropriate ways.

Spectrum Cymru have been delivering educational training workshops to pupils and staff in schools on the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Agenda. A total of 14 schools in the county borough received this training during 2019-2020, and 2 schools received staff consultations.

3 primary schools in the county borough have started the KIVA anti-bullying programme within their schools. This anti-bullying toolkit which is taught within KS2 with the aim of preventing any bullying incidents. It also provides end of year pupils' survey and results. We are currently waiting for our first full set of data from these schools to analyse the impact.

Plans were being made to host 'The Diana Award – anti-bullying programme' for the first time ever in Caerphilly, at Idris Davies 3-18 School in April 2020. However, this had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. When possible we will look at rescheduling this programme, which will give 10 secondary schools in the county borough the opportunity to receive training as part of the award process.

The Council's Youth Service runs an LGBTQ+ Youth Group called "Guys, Gals and Non-binary Pals" (GGNP). The group is a unique initiative which supports young people aged between 11 and 25 years who identify as LGBTQ+. This full-time project provides access to support, information and advocacy for those across the county borough and surrounding areas. Young people are provided with a safe and confidential environment to express themselves whilst having the opportunity to engage and socialise with other young people that share the same experiences and challenges.

Education Equality Index – Stonewall Cymru

Stonewall's Education Equality Index ensures that measures are in place and positive steps are being taken to support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans young people living in the local community. Measures relate to how well local authorities

- help and support schools to be inclusive,
- celebrate difference and
- prevent and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

Stonewall's Education Equality Index is the only nationwide tool used to benchmark progress being made in this area. It is an effective way to demonstrate good practice but also to realise and understand the gaps where improvement is needed. According to 2018 data, Caerphilly was ranked first in Wales in terms of inclusive practice, and was 19th across the UK.

Stonewall did not carry out an inclusion audit for 2018-2019 as they were restructuring their Equality Index model. The deadline for 2019-2020 audit has been extended to December 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Community Cohesion and Education

Education officers met with the regional community cohesion officer to discuss how their work can complement each other's priorities. A Twinning Project was set up which involves making links between classes of children from schools with diverse catchment areas including ethnically, culturally and socio-economic to create a meaningful context for the exploration of identity. Unfortunately the project has been put on hold until after the pandemic. Twinning can be used to build

relationships to explore what is similar between us and to explore diversity. A guide is being developed and will be published shortly.

As the Regional Cohesion team has a specific focus on promoting inclusion and championing diversity we continue to collaborate with lead equality officers on shared goals and themes. More recently, this has included coordinating work centred on Hate Crime Awareness Week, Refugee Awareness Week (HCAW) and Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD).

To mark this year's HMD, they were hosted by 3 key note speeches from a survivor of the Holocaust – 2 of which were targeted towards children and young people, with a representation from all schools across Gwent we were able to engage over 200 pupils. We also hosted a community and stakeholder session and coordinated a minute silence across the authority as a fitting tribute to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

From a regional perspective we made HCAW a significant focus – in recognition that Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019 coincided with the proposed Brexit leave date. Part of our regional efforts included allocating £5,000 of the regional cohesion budget to local awareness projects. £3,000 of which was utilised to support regional community based initiatives (details listed below). We also purchased literature and merchandise which supported pop up stands placed in local supermarkets, libraries and civic buildings.

In collaboration with a selection of schools across the region, we also worked with children and young people to produce art that depicted messages of inclusion, diversity and acceptance.

Social Media featured heavily, posts were disseminated throughout the week, likewise for all staff via emails. Corporately we partnered with **Show Racism the Red Card** and launched Wear Red Day, we have also been working with local rugby clubs who have promoted HCAW in their supporting literature and via their social media channels.

Please see below a list of West Gwent projects that have been funded via the cohesion budget to support HCAW and delivered in the county borough.

- **Llantarnam Grange Arts and Lewis School Pengam**

This project involved hosting a group of Indonesian students as part of a peer residency programme. It was a week of activities exploring each other's culture. This included day trips, music, dance and art. Cohesion Officers attended the event.

- **Volunteering matters**

A group of young people with additional learning needs undertook a research project into the issues of hate crime experienced by those who identify as having a disability on public transport. This was developed after a previous survey suggested that a large percentage of passengers who identify as having a disability were subjected to abuse whilst traveling on public transport. The group undergoing this research travelled across West Gwent during the week and captured their experiences. This concluded with all young volunteers coming together to collate their findings and to develop a list of recommendations to be sent to the Transport Minister for Wales for consideration.

- **Rec Rock social Enterprise**

In collaboration with Bargoed Library, this project engaged the community to build skills and confidence through music. Organisers created a time table of activities throughout the month of October 2019, which included writing and recording a song that celebrates diversity, two short performances celebrating the contribution made by black artists to the music industry was also facilitated (one targeted towards primary school children and one showing open to the public).

European Union Settled Status Scheme

The Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator provided briefings for key officers in the lead up to the launch of the EU Settled Status Scheme (EUSS). Migration mapping, reflecting inward migration into each authority, also supported the council with building Brexit resilience.

Over this period significant effort has been placed on raising awareness of the EU Settles Status Scheme and supporting local Brexit resilience forums in developing those conversations with EU Nationals residing in the borough.

Regional Community Cohesion Officers visited a large number of local businesses known to have a high percentage of EU Nationals in their workforce. They worked with those businesses and covered shift patterns to ensure messages have been disseminated to all effected staff. The focus of their work now is to work with recruitment agencies in the area to reach a higher volume of EU Nationals.

As part of that effort, the Regional Community Cohesion Officers hosted European Union Settled Status Scheme awareness events, which were run in collaboration with third sector partners who were able to provide immigration advice (IOSC registered). Supported via the Community Cohesion budget, EUSS literature was

printed and available in multiple EU languages, which were available to all departments, schools and community buildings. We also worked in partnership with the Local Education Authority on communicating key messages to families who are known to the authority to be EU Nationals.

The Community Cohesion Team liaised with a host of schools across the West Gwent region, delivering anti-discrimination workshops to over 500 pupils. These sessions support schools in promoting equality and awareness and focus on positive messages about diversity, the sessions also help to inform teachers with regards to what constitutes identity based bullying. These included a number of key stage 2 diversity training sessions at Phillipstown Primary and White Rose Primary. Further sessions were delivered to years 7, 8 and 9 at Lewis School Pengam, Heolddu Comprehensive School and 'Y Ganolfan' at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni – Y Gwyndy campus.

Global Resettlement Programme

Caerphilly continues to support refugee families. Consistent support has been provided by the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator (RCCC) in response to all aspects of the programme(s). The RCCC is currently overseeing and supporting the Council's in its ongoing participation of both schemes

The RCCC has wrote a report for Cabinet in Caerphilly regarding the future involvement in resettling refugees into the area, through the Global Resettlement Programme, which will mark the conclusion of the current resettlement programmes. This report was presented in November 2020 due to the pandemic and the Council has agreed to participate in the new Global Resettlement Programme. Meanwhile the ongoing assistance to those families that have already arrived via the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme will continue for the duration of 5 years from arrival.

Some the work undertaken by the RCCC to support the programme includes:

- Managing the regional ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) support which has been procured to ensure all families are in receipt of consistent provision,
- Ongoing liaison with the case worker team in the support they are providing to families; this includes developing approaches with the team to overcome challenging behaviour/complex needs etc.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

Caerphilly County Borough Council continues to make progress towards fulfilling its requirements within the National Training Framework. Please see **Section 10.**

Diversity in the Workforce for training details.

Addressing the Gender Pay Gap

The Council has published its Gender Pay Gap Statement for 2019. The data is published on the Council's website and a government website by the 30th March each year. There was a delay in publishing the 2019 Statement due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Total Number of Employees included in this data: 6666

Number of Females: 4684 (70.26%)

Number of Males: 1982 (29.73%)

Table 2 – Gender Pay Gap Summary

	%
1. Mean gender pay gap - Ordinary pay	8.3%
2. Mean hourly Rate - Ordinary pay (Male/Female)	(£12.65 / £11.60)
3. Median gender pay gap - Ordinary pay	10.3%
4. Median hourly rate - Ordinary Pay (Male/Female)	(£11.24 / £10.08)
1. Mean gender pay gap - Bonus pay in the 12 months ending 31 March 2020	0%
4. Median gender pay gap - Bonus pay in the 12 months ending 31 March 2020	0%
5. The proportion of male and female employees paid a bonus in the 12 months ending 31 March 2020:	Male - 0 Female - 0

Note: In Table 2 ,Ordinary Pay' means basic pay; allowances; pay for leave; and shift premium pay. It does not include overtime pay; redundancy pay; pay in lieu; or non-monetary remuneration. The Council does not offer precework or bonus incentive schemes.

Table 3 - Proportion of male and female employees in each quartile

Quartile	Female % (People)	Male % (People)
First (lower) quartile (£8.50 - £9.01)	87.5% (1458)	12.5% (208)
Second quartile (£9.02 - £10.65)	66.3% (1105)	33.7% (562)
Third quartile (£10.66 – £13.77)	64.4% (1072)	35.6% (594)
Fourth (upper) quartile (£13.18 – £74.61)	62.9% (1049)	37.1% (618)

As shown in **Table 3** the data identifies that significantly more women than men occupy posts in every quartile due to a predominantly female Council workforce.

Proportionately, the data shows that of the male workforce (1982):

- 10.49% occupy posts in the lower quartile,
- 28.36% in the 2nd quartile,
- 29.97% in the 3rd quartile and
- 31.18% in the 4th quartile.

Comparatively, amongst the female workforce (4684):

- 31.13% occupy posts in the lower quartile,
- 23.59% in the 2nd quartile,
- 22.89% in the 3rd quartile and
- 22.39% in the 4th quartile.

The Council is confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap is the result of roles in which male and females currently work and the salaries that these roles attract.

Our gender pay gap is reflective of the causes of gender pay gap at a societal level. For example research has identified that, although parents are increasingly flexible, the responsibility of childcare still falls disproportionately upon women. It is a fact within this data that the vast majority of posts in the lower quartile are part time posts. 1244 of these posts are Grade One in the Council's evaluated pay structure and held by females in the areas of cleaning, catering and breakfast clubs. Part time opportunities continue to attract female applicants in the vast majority of cases.

The Council's services are diverse and include cleaning, catering, refuse and recycling, housing, social services/care services, leisure, youth, libraries, education services including adult education, technical services, planning and highways.

To view the full statement please see agenda item 8 - [Cabinet Agenda - 11 March 2020](#)

Improving Physical Access

The Disability Access Work Programme

The Council's Corporate Property Services Division has continued to deliver improvements to make public buildings accessible for all via the Disability Access Work Programme. Each year a programme of work is arranged to update and improve the physical access capacity of a range of Council-owned buildings.

During 2019-2020, £65,000 of funding was available to support disability access improvement works. The works included:

Education

- The provision of handrails within some school buildings – **£3,000**

Communities

- Ramp access from fire exits at some community centres – **£15,000**
- Hoist for swimming pool at a leisure centre – **£6,000**
- Improvements to the accessibility of main entrances of adult education sites – **£19,000**
- Improvements to the accessibility of main entrances of youth centres – **£4,000**
- Provision of disabled car parking bays within parks – **£3,000**
- Car park accessibility at corporate offices – **£2,000**

Social Services

- Improved toilet provision and improvements to main entrance doors at 2 day care facilities and 1 residential care home – **£13,000**

Improving Communication Access

Council Website

The website is 100% bilingual in terms of webpage content. A full audit of the website was conducted in 2019, following a Welsh Language Commissioner Investigation (CSG304). Despite our best efforts to meet all the enforcement actions, we cannot be certain that the English and Welsh text on our website is a complete match. However, we remain committed to ensuring that this is continually checked and monitored, and any inconsistencies are acted on as a priority. The review of the Council's website is a continuous activity, and the working group set-up continue to meet regularly to maintain progress.

We are working towards the new accessibility legislation that will require the Council's website to be compliant with *World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Level AA* by 23 September 2020. We are in the process of auditing the site and striving to make the necessary amendments to reach this compliance.

As part of the same legislation, we will publish an accessibility statement which contains details of where the website is compliant with WCAG 2.1 AA as well as highlighting any non-compliant areas. The plan of action to resolve these non-compliant areas will also be provided.

On the website, under the 'Accessibility' option, links are provided to guides on the following areas:

- making your mouse easier to use
- using your keyboard to control your mouse
- alternatives to a keyboard and mouse
- increasing the size of the text in your web browser
- changing text and background colours
- how to magnify your screen
- screen readers and talking browsers

An Accessibility Group will be set-up, made up with officers responsible for writing and/or publishing documents and reports on the Council's website. The group will share knowledge with each other as we strive to make all documents, the website and mobile apps compliant in line with the regulations.

Access to information

The website had the following number of hits/visits between June 2019 and April 2020.

- **English page views** - 4,284,754
- **Welsh page views** - 46,949
- **No. of subscribers to the English version of the Gov Delivery bulletins**
34,445 subscribers with 136 bulletins sent and an engagement rate of 82.30%
- **No. of subscribers to the Welsh version of the Gov Delivery bulletins**
313 subscribers with 132 bulletins sent (less due to the technical error which has been rectified) and an engagement rate of 71.30%

Social Media Data

Table 4 – Number of followers to the Council's social media channels during 2019-20

Social Media Channel	Number of followers	Number of posts
Twitter	18,600	4,761
Instagram	2,897	4,761
Facebook	25,984	4,761
LinkedIn	4,186	180

Inclusive Engagement and Participation

Engagement and Participation continued at pace across Caerphilly County Borough Council during 2019/2020, both internally with our staff and externally with our communities and partners.

As the Transformation programme 'Team Caerphilly – Better Together' gathered pace, the council's Senior Communications Officer was seconded into the Transformation team – to provide dedicated communications and engagement expertise to support this key strategic priority.

The 'Team Caerphilly – Better Together' Transformation Strategy, endorsed by the Council in summer 2019, highlights 'engaging and working with our communities' as a critical element of the programme. The strategy highlighted that we will '*use the best practice of the International Association of Public Participation to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower our communities*'.

This saw the development and endorsement of a Team Caerphilly 'Consultation and Engagement' Framework, endorsed by the council's Cabinet in February 2020, which set out an approach for a common understanding to further improve engagement. It sets out the principles and standards for how the council will engage to build '*clear, shared expectations that enables a focus on what can be achieved*'.

The principles within the framework are:

- We will empower our residents to have greater influence over the issues that affect them
- We will increase and strengthen the role of communities in how we live, work and visit Caerphilly county borough
- This will help us to understand the needs of our communities, which in turn, will help to ensure the services we deliver meet those needs, and that available resources are used effectively and in line with agreed priorities
- We will support communities to take action, by helping them identify needs and support them in developing community led solutions.

The strategic principles of the Equality Act 2010 and the specific duties, and the National Principles of Public Engagement in Wales are embedded throughout the document.

Internally, the council has conducted a range of engagement and participation activities with staff across the organisation, including a series of sessions in January/February 2020 led by the three Corporate Directors. These sessions included interactive sessions, where staff members were encouraged to offer ideas and solutions for how their own areas of work could be made more effective and/or efficient for the benefit of all.

This feedback has been crucial in helping to shape service provision in a number of key areas.

Live consultation and engagement activities continue to be promoted proactively on the front page of the Council's website, as well as across its digital channels. Further details of current engagement activities (including links to live surveys where appropriate) and the outcomes of recent engagement activities are also recorded on the website - [Caerphilly Council - Consultations](#)

During 2019/2020, the council carried out a number of key corporate level consultations including:

- The Team Caerphilly 'Consultation and Engagement' Framework and the council's draft Equality Objectives 2020-2024 were consulted on simultaneously as effective engagement and participation underpin several of the objectives within the council's Strategic Equalities Plan (see next section)
- The Caerphilly Conversation – the council's annual budget consultation, which exemplifies how the Council uses a variety of approaches to encourage participation, promote consultations and ensure that all sectors of the community are enabled to have their say

As in previous years, The Caerphilly Conversation saw all promotional and consultation correspondence available fully bilingually. There was written correspondence to all key groups as outlined in the council's "Consultation and Monitoring Guidance"

Face to face activities including town centre/supermarket engagement; drop in sessions at libraries across the borough and a Viewpoint Panel meeting were supported by digital media (including Facebook, Twitter and NewsOnline), video and web content, Newslane, targeted e-mails to stakeholders and paper and online surveys.

Menter Iaith Caerffili facilitated a Welsh discussion group face to face, members of the Caerphilly Parent Network and Youth Forum Members, as well as wider members of the public also attended a meeting of the council's Viewpoint Panel.

For drop in sessions, residents who had any specific requirements such as access, hearing loop, required translation facilities or wishing to use the Welsh language at the drop in sessions were asked to contact us in advance of attending.

To view the full report click this link - [Caerphilly Conversation 2019-2020](#)

Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 – Development and Consultation Process

Alongside every local authority in Wales, to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, Caerphilly County Borough Council is required by the Welsh Government to prepare a Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-2024. This needed to be published by April 2020, however due to the pandemic an extension was given, and the new Plan was approved by full Council in October 2020.

The Plan has been written to explain to staff, elected members, citizens and stakeholders, how Caerphilly County Borough Council intends to deliver its equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

Building on the ongoing commitment and previous work of the Council to achieve equality, the Council undertook a range of evidence gathering and pre-consultation engagement to develop the content of the draft Strategic Equality Plan and to develop draft Equality Objectives in a considered way:

- A review of legislative requirements
- A review of external reports and guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- A review of the Council's current Strategic Equalities Plan and associated documents and guidance
- A review of previous consultation exercises undertaken by the Council in relation to equalities issues
- An analysis of local and national datasets
- A review of the Welsh Government and other local authority equalities documents
- Engagement with service delivery managers within the Council
- Discussions with the Welsh Local Government Association, Welsh Government and other local authorities across Wales, regarding key equalities issues which are current and in the future that could be considered equality objectives

The draft equality objectives within the Plan were then subject to a period of formal consultation.

The purpose of the formal consultation undertaken was to seek the views of citizens, elected members, staff and other stakeholders on the draft objectives outlined within the draft Strategic Equality Plan and to identify the most appropriate actions to help the Council achieve those objectives, once agreed. This approach will help identify meaningful actions based identified need and is in line with that of Welsh Government.

Specifically, the consultation invited respondents to give their views in relation to each of the draft objectives as follows:

1. Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
2. Improve education opportunities for all
3. Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
4. Engage with members of the community to participate and have their voices heard when planning service delivery
5. Ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
6. Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough
7. Reduce the Gender Pay Gap

The formal consultation took place over a period of 4 weeks from 11th November 2019 to 6th December 2019. To enable all those who wished to give their views to take part, all consultation documents were made available bilingually and in a variety of formats including easy read and large print.

The consultation was promoted in a variety of ways and made available across a range of platforms. The primary consultation tool was a questionnaire but participants were encouraged to respond in a number of ways. Face to face consultation took place with groups who have a particular interest in this consultation and are harder to reach via other consultation methods. We engaged with Caerphilly People First, Caerphilly Parent Network, Caerphilly Deaf Community and Disability CanDo through targeted focus groups.

The consultation was promoted internally to elected members and employees and was shared widely with:

- local and regional organisations with an equalities interest and local public sector partner organisations via e-mail distribution lists for wider circulation
- local third sector organisations via Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) for wider dissemination
- local town and community councils via e-mail. All town and community council's held meetings within or just after the consultation period
- Caerphilly Viewpoint Panel members, Caerphilly People First, the Regional Community Cohesion Officer, Menter Iaith Caerffili, Disability Cando, Caerphilly 50+ Forum, Umbrella Cymru, Stonewall Cymru, Disability Wales, Deaf-Friendly and Caerphilly County Borough's Youth Service and LGBT Youth Group were contacted via e-mail and encouraged to take part

To view the Plan please click on this link - [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)

Pride Cymru 2019 – Proud Councils



Caerphilly County Borough Council was pleased to be represented at Pride Cymru's Big Weekend in Cardiff under the banner 'Proud Councils'. Pride Cymru's Big Weekend is the biggest celebration of diversity, inclusion and the LGBT+ community in Wales, and is an opportunity for everyone, no matter their age, gender, sexuality or race to come together and celebrate all that makes Wales such a welcoming place.

This was the sixth year of the 'Proud Councils' network, which brings together a number of councils across South Wales, highlighting the partnership work that councils across the region undertake to advance equality within South Wales and to celebrate the diversity across our communities.



Representatives from Caerphilly County Borough Council, had a 'Proud Councils' stall at Pride Cymru's Big Weekend. Staff engaged with visitors to discuss how councils can further improve upon the work they undertake to ensure equality for LGBT+ residents and employees, as well as signposting to services offered by councils and partners.

Caerphilly County Borough Council, as part of Proud Councils, took part in the Pride Cymru Parade for the first time, marching and celebrating through the streets of the city centre.

Proud Councils are committed to promote equalities in public services and remove the barriers faced by LGBT people.

Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of the new legislation, in Wales the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated less favourably. Public bodies no longer need to develop and implement Welsh Language Schemes but instead now must comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards.

The Welsh Language Commissioner has issued a Compliance Notice which sets out which of the 176 standards in the legislation apply to the local authority, along with any exemptions and their implementation dates.

Our progress is recorded each year in the **Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2019-2020**, and is published on our website. To view the report please click here - [Welsh Language Standards](#).

Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

An annual monitoring report is published on the Council's website every summer to report on its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The annual report covers four areas required of it under the regulatory framework and demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to providing bilingual services to the public and staff members.

The four areas to report on are as follows:

- Complaints from the Public
- Staff Language Skills
- Welsh Medium Training Provision
- Recruiting to Empty Posts

Four of the Strategic Equality Objectives explicitly include Welsh language issues, namely:

Equality Objective 4 – Improving Communication Access

Equality Objective 5 – Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

Equality Objective 10 – Diversity in the Workplace

Equality Objective 11 – Corporate Compliance

Some Welsh language work successes from 2019-2020 include:

- **Standardisation of Place Names List** – Work undertaken with the Welsh Language Commissioner’s Office to review and agree a standard list of place names for the county borough. The list takes into consideration local usage, history, pronunciation, grammar and spelling. This work, which started in summer 2018 and concluded in autumn 2019, included presenting a panel of experts with evidence of local usage and pronunciation of place names in the county borough. The work has been regarded as best practice in Wales and the open and supportive dialogue between the Council and the Commissioner’s staff was instrumental. Having an agreed list ensures consistency in the way local place names are spelt and pronounced in the future.
- **Commissioner’s Assurance Report 2018-2019** – Caerphilly Council was mentioned in the Welsh Language Commissioner’s annual assurance report ‘Rights in Use’. The report references the audit of our Welsh Language Services, which we commissioned Menter Iaith Caerffili to undertake, with the results being used to identify gaps and celebrate successes.

Our partnership work with Menter Iaith Caerffili continues through linkages within the Welsh Language Strategy and is invaluable in relation to some of our service delivery e.g. Menter Iaith Caerffili were commissioned by Tourism to deliver the public address announcements at the Big Cheese 2019, so that they were bilingual and compliant with the relevant Standards.

- **Complaints and Investigations** – Only 1 recorded complaint and 7 service requests relating to the Welsh language were received during 2019-2020. See **Corporate Compliance** section. We can also report that for the duration of 2019-2020 we received 0 new investigations, which is extraordinary and shows the work undertaken to comply with the Standards is beginning to take effect.

Diwrnod Shwmae / Su’mae

Caerphilly council staff joined thousands of people and organisations across Wales to mark Diwrnod Shwmae / Su’mae (Monday 15th October).

Caerphilly Council took great strides to become a bilingual authority as part of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. As part of this work, the promotion of Diwrnod Shwmae/Su’ame with staff, the community and schools has provided an opportunity for everyone across the borough to celebrate the Welsh language.

Libraries across the county borough celebrated 'Diwrnod Shwmae/Su'mae' using a selfie frame to prompt and encourage staff to say “#ShwmaeSumaeCaerffili”! They also took to social media to help spread the message



Council, staff were invited to a 'Coffee Morning' at Penallta House where they enjoyed a Welsh cake, a hot drink and an opportunity to practice their Welsh skills with others from across the organisation. In addition to this, Menter Iaith Caerffili attended the morning to promote opportunities to use the Welsh language in social activities in their sessions across the borough.

All staff were encouraged to start every conversation with Shwmae, and information was displayed which included a time line for the Welsh language explaining how the language has evolved.

Supporting Age-friendly Communities

Poetry Together



Year 10 pupils from Lewis School in Pengam joined residents from Trafalgar Park Care Home, Nelson to demonstrate the power of the written word in bringing different age groups together at a recent Poetry Together event in October 2019. The event, held at Eaton Square School in London, was hosted by broadcaster Gyles Brandreth and attended by the Duchess of Cornwall.

During the event the pupils and care home residents, with ages ranging from 14 to 94, recited works by Idris Davies, a Polish poem called Highlands, performed by Polish war veteran Leon Block and pupil Kascper Dudek, and a piece written by Trafalgar Park resident Beryl Jones called 'Friendship'.

National Poetry Day highlighted the benefits of learning poetry by heart and bridging the gap between generations from improved memory and speech development to increased confidence, from learning and reciting poems. The inspiration for Poetry Together came after Gyles Brandreth made a radio programme last year about the value of learning poetry by heart, featuring University of Cambridge research that showed how learning and speaking poetry benefits both younger and older people.

Caerphilly 50+ Forum - Christmas Event

The 50+ Forum continue with their Inter-generational events at Lewis School Pengam. During summer 2019 the newly retired assistant head teacher of Lewis School Pengam, Mike Oliver, joined the 50+ Forum's Steering Committee. He has been supporting and facilitating the Inter-generational Lunch Club's held at the school for a number of years.

The Steering Committee organized a special Christmas Lunch Club event in 2019. The 50+ Forum funded the entertainment and the invitation was extended to include Forum members. A Christmas meal was enjoyed by all, with 80 people in attendance, a mix of members from the Inter-generational Lunch Club, 50+ Forum, Carers (unpaid), Care Home, Stroke Group and Church Group. During the meal they were entertained by two former school pupils of Lewis School Pengam.

Dementia Friends

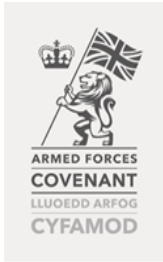
Dementia Friendly Communities progressed over the 2019-2020 period with a bigger focus on involving children, young people and schools. There was still a focus on delivering Dementia Friends awareness and Train the Trainer courses (Dementia Champions) with:

- 1395 people became dementia friends with 54 sessions delivered
- 10 additional Dementia Champions trained

The local Dementia Friendly Community Planning Group is chaired by Cllr Carol Andrews, who was instrumental in developing the first school in the borough achieving a Dementia Friendly status: Heolddu School in Bargoed. Going forward we will be working towards Bargoed town becoming a Dementia Friendly town.

Supporting the Armed Forces Covenant

Armed Forces in Caerphilly



In Wales there are estimated to be 385,000 members of the Armed Forces Community, this equates to 12% of the population. This includes serving personnel, reservists and cadets as well as their families and ex-Service personnel. Many will have experienced conflict, directly or indirectly, and the challenges that can arise following this.

There are 3,230 military and civilian personnel based in Wales and there are 60 Ministry of Defence establishments and bases, including reserve centres and the training estates. It is known that 15,230 left the UK Regular Armed Forces in 2018. It is estimated 3000 settled in Wales.

Caerphilly County Borough Council was one of the first local authorities in Wales to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and honour their pledge to support the Armed Forces Community.

It has been a very productive year in raising the profile of the Armed Forces Covenant within Caerphilly County Borough Council and the wider Gwent area. This has been achieved by policy amendments, training, events and publicity. The Gwent Armed Forces Covenant Newsletter is very well received and distributed throughout the borough and Gwent.

Training

The Armed Forces Covenant e-learning package is available via intranet for staff and hosted on the Council's website. Bespoke training for departments has been delivered however; due to Covid 19 these sessions will now be offered online.

Invictus Games



Welsh Army veteran Jonathan Congreve, 57, from Gelligaer was honoured by Caerphilly County Borough Council at a meeting of full council at Penallta House on Tuesday 3 March 2020. Mr Congreve has been selected to represent Team UK at the Invictus Games in 2021, competing in archery, swimming and rowing events. Jon served in the army for 22 years, leaving the service as a Staff Sergeant in the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers.

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – Gold Award

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) recognises those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to support the armed forces community. It's the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) prestigious badge of honour for organisations that have demonstrated and advocated outstanding assistance to reserves, cadets, veterans and their families.

This year 10 employers in Wales were awarded the Gold – 3 of which are in Gwent. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Caerphilly County Borough and Newport City Council were among the recipients. All work closely to ensure the best support is offered to the Armed Forces Community.



As an authority, Caerphilly County Borough Council has been committed to providing an active approach towards the Armed Forces community. HR policies and procedures are in place to allow flexibility for training and mobilisation commitments and there has been a focus on improving employment opportunities for service personnel including a Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

CCBC supporting #40ThousandStrong Campaign

Help for Heroes has thanked the people of Caerphilly for supporting their #40ThousandStrong campaign to raise awareness of the needs of men and women medically discharged from military service.

Local businesses, civic leaders, and the public dug deep and donated over £1,000 when volunteers were joined by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Cardiff Military Wives Choir and Reservists from 614 Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force on Saturday 2 November at Castle Court Shopping Centre in the town.

An installation of over 4,000 miniature figures was on display to demonstrate the scale of the need for physical and mental health recovery among the Armed Forces community who are medically discharged from service. Supporters were able to donate to the charity and receive their own boxed figure as a symbol of the campaign.

Caerphilly was chosen as the location for the Welsh launch of the charity's campaign because the town has a population of almost 40,000, the number of men and women who have left their military career due to medical discharge over the last 20 years.

HMF Education Support Officer

Children of Armed Forces personnel in Caerphilly are benefitting from a new package of support to help with their attainment and development, through funding and a dedicated support officer. It follows a successful bid in obtaining a grant from the Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund to employ a HM Forces education support officer, who works across education and with third sector organisations to raise awareness of the unique challenges the children of military personnel may face caused by the effects of mobility or deployment. New funding has been agreed from the Ministry of Defence for a 2 year post starting Sept 2020.



Public Awareness

Raising public awareness of the work of the local authorities in terms of the Armed Forces is progressing well. The Facebook (Gwent Armed Forces Community) and Twitter (@GwentAFC) pages that promote the work and events for the Armed Forces Community has gained a lot of traction and analytics are positive.

The quarterly newsletter is produced, with input from third sector organisations, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and community drop-ins. The newsletter is sent to all GP surgeries, job centres, libraries and the wider community, which is well received and reaching the wider community that may not have access to the internet.

A directory of services for Gwent has been very well received. The document is hosted on the Council's website for public access.

Working with Gypsy and Traveller Communities

The Council's Gypsy and Traveller Group meets biannually to monitor changes to the local situation since the publication of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment completed in 2015 and approved by Welsh Government in 2016. The focus is currently on the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, the undertaking of which has been delayed due to the pandemic. However some ground work has taken place along with consulting with representatives from Gypsy and Traveller support groups regarding the assessment. It is anticipated that the assessment will be completed in spring 2021, to feed into the revision of the Local Development Plan.

During 2019-2020 there weren't any illegal encampments in the county borough for us to deal with. We have been working with a site in the north of the county borough throughout the last year 2019-2020, assisting and advising them with any welfare issues such as drainage and water supply. We have also provided the site with information from Welsh Government to help during the ongoing lockdown restrictions. During the engagement process with this site, we liaised with the Travelling Ahead: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Advice and Advocacy Service.

Diversity in the Workforce

Improvements to the CCBC Workforce Data

The Council must keep up to date information of all employees on its HR database to ensure that it can communicate with staff effectively and fulfil its contract obligations as an employer. The Council must collect information about employees by law, for example their Welsh language skills and equalities data which gives the Council an insight to the workforce profile to satisfy the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The ability to record Welsh language information in terms of staff data and analysis is an integral part of the payroll system within Caerphilly County Borough Council. Financial year-end figures to 31 March 2020 are shown below in **Table 6**.

In accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice, the Council must assess and record the language skills of its employees. The Council must also report annually on the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (Standard 170). The relevant Standards are listed below. To view the Compliance Notice please click this link - [CCBC - Compliance Notice](#)

Table 5 – Relevant Welsh Language Standards relating to assessing and recording the Welsh Language Skills of employees

Standard No.	Details
127	You must assess the Welsh languages skills of your employees.
151	You must keep a record (following assessments of your employees' Welsh language skills made in accordance with standard 127), of the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of each financial year and, where you have that information, you must keep a record of the skill level of those employees.

Compared with last year, again we have recorded additional Welsh speakers on the HR system across almost all but 2 of the 17 service areas. The increase can partly be explained by a more robust process being in place to capture this information, e.g. at appointed stage.

Table 6 – Total number of staff and Welsh speakers recorded on iTrent
Council Totals

	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
2016-2017	8,682	402	4.63
2017-2018	8,767	436	4.97
2018-2019	8,533	1,581	18.53
2019-2020	8,402	1,796	21.37

Overview of the 2019-2020 Equalities Training Programme

The provision of a comprehensive training programme for staff and elected members on equalities and Welsh language topics, which includes courses to learn Welsh and British Sign Language, ran successfully.

In total, **253** members of staff registered to attend specific equalities related courses as listed in **Table 7**

Table 7– Staff registered to attend equalities related courses

Course Title	Attendance	Numbers withdrawn
British Sign Language (levels 1-4)	15	0
Dementia Friends Training	102	0
Equality Impact Assessment	29	3
Equalities Awareness	67	0
Mindfulness Awareness	40	2

We continue our endeavours to improve the ability of our staff to undertake robust Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) when planning, revising or considering reducing / terminating any Council service, policy, function, strategy or project.

A key area of success was the delivery of the Dementia Friends training and the “training to train” system for Dementia Champions. Dementia Champions are also now delivering the Dementia Friends training within their own service areas, this has been particularly successful within our library’s division.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Training

Caerphilly county borough council has made significant progress towards fulfilling its requirements within the National Training Framework. The focus for 2019/2020 has remained the co-ordination and delivery of **Group 1** (Awareness Raising) and **Group 2** (Ask and Act) training. Internal delivery capacity has also been developed.

In 2019 our VAWDASV Training Plan was reviewed and updated to reflect progress made since 2016/17 and to detail our training goals up to 2022. The new training plan was submitted to the Regional VAWDASV Team in March 2019.

The number of staff trained to date is very high reflecting the size of our workforce.

Group 1 progress:

- At the end of March 2020, 4177 current employees had completed Group 1 training (Awareness Raising). This equates to 57% of the workforce (increased from 42% 31/3/2019)

Group 2 progress:

- At the end of March 2019, 682 staff had completed Group 2 (Ask and Act) training. This is 45% of staff identified as requiring the training (increased from 24% 31/3/2019)

Progress has been made in **Group 1** and **Group 2** of the National Training Framework. This will continue to be our focus for 2020/21 with a planned roll out to schools. A review of **Group 3** (Champions) and **Group 6** (Leadership) requirements is also planned. Underway is also the development for this training to be delivered digitally. Strengthening Leadership Series films have been made available to all **Group 6** members to view. **Group 1** training was rolled out to all **Group 6** members during 2018/2019. The Senior Leadership Team have also had the opportunity to complete **Group 2** training in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Welsh Language Training

A requirement of the Welsh Language Standards in relation to staff training is the provision of Welsh language training courses.

Since 2001, **2,034** of the Council's staff and staff of partner organisations have attended conversational Welsh classes ranging from taster courses for absolute beginners, up to and including 'A' level courses.

The relevant Standards are as follows:

130	You must provide opportunities during working hours – (a) for your employees to receive basic Welsh language lessons, and (b) for employees who manage others to receive training on using the Welsh language in their role as managers.
131	You must provide opportunities for employees who have completed basic Welsh language training to receive further training free of charge, to develop their language skills.
132	You must provide training courses so that your employees can develop – (a) awareness of the Welsh language (including awareness of its history and its role in Welsh culture); (b) an understanding of the duty to operate in accordance with the Welsh language standards; (c) an understanding of how the Welsh language can be used in the workplace.







There was a significant increase in the number of staff who attended Welsh language training during the year in question, with the Council arranging conversational and awareness raising training for staff and elected members.

The data for the courses offered and attended by Caerphilly CBC staff for the academic year 2019-2020 is as illustrated in **Table 8**:

Table 8 - Welsh Language courses offered and attended by Caerphilly CBC staff for the academic year 2019-2020

TITLE OF COURSE OFFERED	NUMBER OF COURSES OFFERED	NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING
30 Week	41	36
Cymraeg Gwaith - 10 Hour Course	15	159
2 Day Welsh Taster	3	15
Say Something in Welsh (Online)	3	13
Withdrawn from courses	Not applicable	0

The online 10 Hour Online Course called **Cymraeg Gwaith** (Work Welsh) was launched in spring 2018. The courses introduce you to everyday words and phrases depending on which sector you work in. The courses on offer include the healthcare sector, social care sector, emergency services, teachers, headteachers, tourism sector, retail, transport sector and a few others.

 <p>HEALTHCARE SECTOR: PART 2</p> <p>Part 2 - This free course has been tailored for the Healthcare sector. The course is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>	 <p>SOCIAL CARE: PART 2</p> <p>Part 2 - This free course has been tailored for the Social Care sector and is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>	 <p>EMERGENCY SERVICES: PART 2</p> <p>Part 2 - This free course has been tailored for the Emergency Services. The course is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>
 <p>TEACHERS: PART 1</p> <p>Part 1 - This free course has been tailored for teachers. The course is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>	 <p>HEADTEACHERS: PART 1</p> <p>Part 1 - This free course has been tailored for Headteachers. The course is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>	 <p>TOURISM SECTOR: PART 1</p> <p>Part 1 - This free course has been tailored for the Tourism sector. The course is open to everyone.</p> <p>Get Started</p>

The course can be undertaken in stages, Part 1 and Part 2, and takes the learner through a series of scenarios followed by a set of questions. On completion of the course, learners are emailed a certificate.

Lockdown in March 2020 saw an increase in the number of people completing these courses with over 500 courses being completed, mainly by teaching staff.

Recruitment and the Welsh Language

A requirement of the Welsh Language Standards is to report on our progress in relation to recruitment as outlined in Standard 136. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, a total of **2,401** new and vacant posts were advertised. The Welsh language requirements of these posts were as follows:

- (i) Welsh language skills were essential

24

- (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post

10

Welsh language training courses have been available to all staff free of charge since the 2001-2002 academic year (see **Section 3**)

- (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable,

2327

- (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary

2336*

***This post was assessed as no Welsh language skills necessary due to the Welsh language skills of the other team members. However, all vacancies are advertised as Welsh desirable as a minimum.**

It was identified, from analysing the data recorded, that the question being asked on the Welsh Language Assessment Form '**No Welsh Language Requirement**' is either not being answered correctly or recorded correctly. This is an area that will be reviewed and any improvements identified will be implemented. We will work with recruiting managers and People Services and clarify any guidance currently in place.

The Welsh Language Skills Assessments in relation to vacant or new posts have been recorded by Human Resources since October 2016. The assessment and supporting evidence then forms part of the business case that is required to gain permission to fill a vacant post or create a new one.

Following last year's report the recruitment process has been strengthened with the completion of a Welsh Language Skills Assessment for all new or vacant posts, which are advertised as **Welsh desirable** as a standard requirement. The assessment undertaken determines whether any new or vacant posts should be advertised as **Welsh essential**, in accordance with the job role and contact with the public.

Corporate Compliance

An analysis of the complaints received during 2019 - 2020

Section 4 of the **Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020** defines what is considered a complaint in terms of Equalities and Welsh language issues. This is in order to maintain consistency of approach when dealing with any complaint of this nature as the Council operates an integrated Equalities and Welsh Language service.

v) Complaints

- 4.10 *A complaint can be defined as a situation where a member of the public, or a group, is not satisfied with the standard of a service, or the action or lack of action by the Council or a member of staff.*
- 4.11 *All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the corporate Complaints policy, but with the added need for translation of all incoming and outgoing correspondence on the matter, in line with the **Welsh Language Translation Guidance 2016** and any other relevant translation, design or format issue.*
- 4.12 *Complaints will be fully monitored by Equalities category and in which language or format they were initially made.*
- 4.13 *Complaints can be made in writing, by telephone or via email to the Council's dedicated email address complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk.*
- 4.14 *Further guidance can be found in the [Equalities and Welsh Language Complaints Guidance](#) document located on our website.*

Equalities and Welsh language complaints data forms part of the quarterly reporting to the Audit Committee as part of the Corporate Complaints process where appropriate, and the Senior Policy Officer (Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation) now sits on the corporate Learning from Complaints Group that meets quarterly to discuss specific and cross-cutting complaints.

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner for example. Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via internal HR processes.

Equalities and Welsh Language complaints are something of a hybrid, in that a failure of process may be as a result of the attitudes or opinions of a staff member towards a particular group for example.

During 2019-2020, we received **1** equalities related complaint. The complaint linked to disability in relation to a highways issues and was responded to within corporate timescales. Also recorded were **5** service requests received relating to equalities. 4 of the service requests related to disability in relation to highways and housing issues and the fifth related to an LGBT+ issue.

During 2019-2020, **1** complaint and **7** service requests were received relating to the Welsh language. The **1** complaint related to a Covid-19 information letter sent out to all residents in English only. A strategic decision was made that due to the urgent nature of the Covid-19 information; all information regarding this matter would be published and sent in English only. The complaint was responded to within corporate timescales. All other documentation and social media messaging related to the ongoing Coronavirus crisis are fully bilingual and meet the requirements of the Council's Compliance Notice.

The **7** service requests included issues with digital online services on our website and a lack of awareness of the Welsh language and lack of Welsh language skills amongst staff in dealing with calls, emails and face to face queries. The service requests have been discussed with the relevant service areas and any issues have been or are currently being resolved via staff awareness raising, Welsh language training or amendments to online digital systems where issues were identified.

Table 9 – Complaints and Service Requests received during 2019-2020 by Directorate and Service Area

Directorate	Service Area	Equalities Complaints	Equalities Service Requests	Welsh Language Complaints	Welsh Language Service Requests
Chief Executive	Chief Executive	-	1	-	-
Communities	Highways	1	1	-	-
	Housing	-	1	-	-
	Leisure	-	1	-	1
	Planning	-	-	-	1
	Registration Service	-	-	-	1
	Venues	-	-	-	2
	Waste Management	-	-	-	1
Education &	Education	-	1	-	-
Corporate Services	Policy & Partnerships	-	-	1	1
	Totals	1	5	1	7

Good Practice, Tailoring Services and Promotion

The following stories show how Council service areas have tailored their day-to-day work to suit the requirements and needs of individual service users. All are excellent examples of putting Equalities and Welsh language related principles to practical use for the benefit of people in the county borough.

Gwent Homelessness Strategy

The Gwent Homelessness Strategy was approved by Cabinet in December 2018 and is now operational and progressing within the county borough. It provides a four year action plan that includes both regional and local objectives. Within the first few months of development, several actions were already achieved with the majority of practical homeless and partnership work already in place in the county borough.

The council successfully worked with Caerphilly Borough Churches Night Shelters again in 2019, in partnership with Rev. Sue Phillips of Elim Baptist Church, Pontllanfraith, and Cornerstone Support Services Ltd. Churches and centres across the county borough were involved and opened their doors to provide facilities and support during the winter months. Extra funding from Welsh Government enabled the partnership to house four out of fifteen Night Shelters clients during the year. Support continues through the homeless prevention fund securing other rough sleepers access to housing.

LGBT Activities



The council was full of rainbow colours at an event in July 2019 to champion diversity and inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community. The authority has made great strides in its quest to become a 'Proud Council' since its launch in 2015. Representatives from Pride Cymru were invited to the council's main office at Penallta House to promote the upcoming Pride event, in partnership with the council's LGBT Youth Group.

A number of events were promoted to celebrate LGBT History Month, Pride Cymru visited the Councils headquarters at Penallta House to promote the work they undertake to promote equality within Wales.



Caerphilly catering staff also joined in with the promotion of the month by providing staff with 'Rainbow Cake' and wearing their rainbow colours



As part of LGBT History Month, Caerphilly Council ran an art competition for schools and youth groups across the county borough, which was based on the LGBT history month theme of 'Poetry, Prose & Plays'.

The young people produced fantastic work. Here are the winning entries for 2020.



As part of the ongoing 'Proud Councils' work, Caerphilly Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf Council were invited to an LGBT History Month event hosted by Coleg y Cymoedd on their Nantgarw Campus. The event included speakers from Pride Cymru and their very own lecturer Paul Davies who spoke about LGBT Rights: Global Perspective



Dementia Action Week

Caerphilly library service and the Alzheimer's Society organised a range of activities held during Dementia Action Week (20-26 May 2019).

Dementia Champions hosted Dementia Friends sessions at local libraries across the county borough. These free sessions were open to the public to attend and were aimed at anyone wishing to learn a little more about Dementia Friends.



The theme for was "Inclusion" based on the fact that over a third of people with dementia saying that they feel lonely, and over a third have lost touch with their friends following a diagnosis. Caerphilly Council urged residents to take action so that people with dementia can stay connected to the things they love for longer.

Period Dignity

The council's Sport and Leisure Services became one of the first leisure services in the UK to take action towards tackling 'period poverty'. Starting with the belief that no girl should miss out on sport and active recreation due to access to sanitary products; the Period Dignity initiative will now see every leisure centre in the county borough contain adequate supplies of sanitary items, to continue to break down the barriers to active living.

Building upon the Welsh Government's decision to provide sanitary products from all schools and colleges across Wales, the Sport and Leisure Services agrees that just as a lack of sanitary products can impact school attendance by up to 2%, a similar impact is experienced at leisure centres. The introduction of available sanitary products will therefore allow Caerphilly's young girls and women to exercise with confidence while continuing to develop the sense of support each leisure centre aims to provide to each user.

The Basement Project celebrates 20 years of service



The Basement Project in Blackwood celebrated their 20 year anniversary of service to young people and the community. The Basement is the information project for Caerphilly Youth Service which provides support, advocacy and general information for young people ages 11-25.

The project offers a number of other services such as group work and information based sessions i.e. drug and alcohol, self-esteem, internet safety, CV writing and many more. They also offer support through running a monthly LGBTQ Group and there are now over 100 LGBTQ young people registered with the group

Mental Health

In conjunction with Unison Caerphilly, a celebration was held for International Men's Day on November the 19 2019. The day was focused towards Men's mental health issues and was attended by over 50 members of staff.

A display of supporting information, highlighting examples of famous faces who have battled mental health issues and contact details for relevant support networks was on display. 'Mind' Caerphilly were in attendance to promote their local mental health programme, specifically aimed at men. There were guest speakers from a number of local support organisations in attendance and the event was closed by former Wales and Everton goalkeeper Neville Southall, who is an advocate for mental health issues in the local area.



Holocaust Memorial Day

Caerphilly County Borough Council commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day at Penallta House with a Gwent-wide event which took place on 30 January 2020, with Dr Martin Stern MBE, Holocaust Survivor, in attendance who relayed his personal experience of the Holocaust.

Dr Martin Stern was born in the Netherlands in 1938. When the Nazis invaded in 1940 life became progressively harder for his Jewish father, who had to go into hiding. Martin was hidden by an Amsterdam based couple close to where Anne Frank was hiding. Aged five, Martin was arrested at school and sent to a prison camp in the Netherlands, a waystation to the Nazi extermination camps. His one year old sister was also sent there by the Dutch police. Unlike most children there, they were sent to the Czech town Terezin where Jews, before being sent to their deaths, were used in a Nazi deception operation to confuse the outside world about the true fate of the Jews.

Due to a remarkable circumstance a woman prisoner looked after them until the end of the war. Few of the 15,000 children who passed through Terezin (Theresienstadt) survived, but Martin and his sister Erica were among them. Their father was sent to Auschwitz and died in Buchenwald concentration camp. An uncle and Martin's grandfather also died in Nazi captivity.

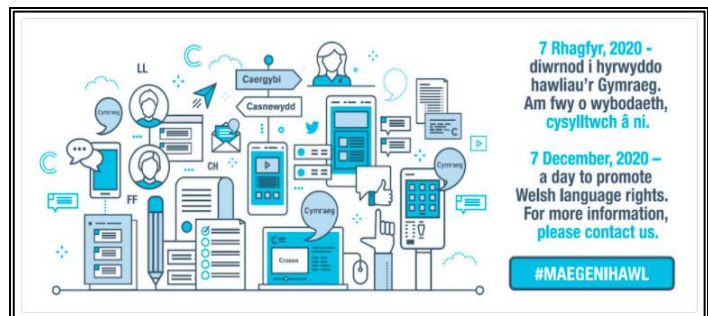
After World War II Martin lived in Amsterdam, before moving to England in 1950. Eventually he studied Medicine in Oxford and became a specialist in asthma and allergic diseases in Leicester.

Since retiring in 2002 Martin has worked in education at The National Holocaust Centre in Laxton, Nottinghamshire, and with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. He is a member of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Leicester. Martin believes that education about genocides and other mass killing must not only educate about what happened but also about what leads human beings to such crimes.



Welsh Language Rights Day (Mae gen i hawl)

Welsh Language Rights Day is a day to promote Welsh language rights. It's an opportunity for organisations like the Council to promote and celebrate the Welsh language services it offers and the rights people have to use the Welsh language when accessing them.



Appendix A - Workforce Data Summary

The following information is high-level data of what the *iTrent* payroll system holds as at 31st March 2020 regarding the Caerphilly CBC workforce profile, in terms of protected characteristics and language ability of staff.

- Gender, Ethnicity and Disability data is currently shown by Directorate.
- Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation data is currently shown by corporate totals only. Data has improved during the last financial year.
- Language Ability is available by Service Area but the data is provided here as Corporate totals for information.
- Other information has not been presented as the categories are currently showing zero records.

Gender by Directorate	Male	Female	Undisclosed
Communities	884	615	0
Education Corporate Services	900	4,223	0
Social Services and Housing	508	1,433	0
Authority Total	2,242	6,160	0

Disability by Directorate	Disabled	No	Undisclosed	Unwilling to declare
Communities	55	1,351	93	0
Education and Corporate Services	81	4,245	797	0
Social Services and Housing	62	1,798	81	0
Authority Total	188	7,247	967	0

Sexual Orientation (totals)	Numbers
Bisexual	18
Gay	33
Heterosexual	2,851
Lesbian	21
Other	27
Undisclosed	5,342
Unwilling to Declare	110
Authority Total	8,402

Ethnicity by Directorate	White	BME	Undisclosed	Unwilling to declare
Communities	1,399	14	83	3
Education and Corporate Services	4,333	38	749	3
Social Services and Housing	1,851	29	60	1
Authority Total	7,431	75	889	7

Religion or Belief (totals)	Numbers
Buddhist	5
Christian (All Denominations)	1,194
Hindu	4
Jewish	1
Muslim	1
Sikh	2
Humanist	6
No Religion	1,594
Undisclosed	5,495
Unwilling to Declare	62
Other	38
Authority Total	8,402

Nationality	Numbers
British (Not Channel Islands or IOM)	1,041
English	74
Northern Irish	3
Irish	6
Welsh	2,129
Scottish	4
Cornish	1
Other	37
Undisclosed	5,101
Unwilling to Declare	6
Authority Total	8,402

Language Ability (Other than English)	Numbers
Arabic	1
Braille	2
Breton	0
BSL (British Sign Language)	46
Croatian	0
Dutch	2
French	37
German	13
Greek	2
Hebrew	1
Hindi	2
Hungarian	0
Italian	3
Kurdish	1
Makaton Sign Language	1
Malayalam	2
Nepali	1
Rumanian	1
Russian	1
Serbian	0
Spanish	11
Tamil	1
Turkish	2
Welsh	1,796

(No staff total is recorded as some staff speak more than two languages)