

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 09 March 2020
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Vale of Glamorgan Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24
Purpose of Report:	To seek endorsement of the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	The Strategic Equality Plan is relevant to all wards, individual member consultation is therefore not appropriate. Consultation has been undertaken with Members, stakeholders and the public as described in the report. The Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee was consulted on the draft Plan and has considered and endorsed the final version presented in this report to Cabinet.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a Strategic Equality Plan in place with equality objectives is a requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and the specific duties for Wales. It frames how the Council will deliver its vision for ‘working together for a fairer future’ and supports the Council’s corporate well-being objectives. • The report sets out how the Council has developed the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. • The report sets out details of the consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 between November 2019 and January 2020, and the feedback received. • The report sets out the changes made to the draft Strategic Equality Plan in response to consultation undertaken and feedback received. • The report sets out the key commitments in the Strategic Equality Plan and how the Council will contribute to the national well-being goals. 	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes how the draft plan (contained in Appendix A) has changed in response to feedback received, notes the equality impact assessment (Appendix B) and notes the feedback and our response to it in the engagement and consultation report (Appendix C).
2. That Cabinet considers this report and the reference from Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee and approves the Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix A) for publication and implementation from 1st April 2020.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure the Council has an effective and up to date Strategic Equality Plan informed by extensive consultation which reflects the work being undertaken across the Council to improve equality and fairness in the Vale of Glamorgan.
2. To enable the Cabinet to consider the draft plan and the views of the Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) and to approve the new Strategic Equality Plan to be in place for the 2020 - 2024 period.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty ('the general duty'). The general duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 1.2 In addition to this, the Council (as a listed body under the Act) must comply with the specific duties in Wales, designed to help performance of the general duty and to aid transparency.
- 1.3 The specific duties in Wales cover a range of requirements, including the requirement to draw up and publish a strategic equality plan and include equality objectives in it.
- 1.4 The Council published its current Strategic Equality Plan in 2016. It must be reviewed no less than every four years.
- 1.5 The current Plan was developed in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the specific duties for Wales. It sets out the Council's equality objectives and how it will deliver them.

- 1.6** Progress is monitored annually and reported on in the Annual Equality Monitoring Report. This is scrutinised by the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee. This report is published on the Council's website.
- 1.7** The Equality and Human Rights Committee monitors compliance. This is typically done through a themed annual review of public sector organisations.
- 1.8** The current Strategic Equality Plan ends in March 2020 and therefore a new Plan has needed to be produced setting out the Council's priorities for the next four years. This report provides Cabinet with an overview of the process undertaken to develop the Plan and seeks consideration and approval of the Strategic Equality Plan 2020 -2024 (Appendix A).

2. Key Issues for Consideration

A New Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24

- 2.1** A Strategic Equality Plan is the mechanism used to detail information that demonstrates that the Council is meeting the general duty. It must include information on a number of prescribed issues, such as its arrangements to identify and collect relevant equality and employment information, arrangements for assessing the likely impact on protected groups of any policies and practices, and how the authority will promote knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties among employees.
- 2.2** A key element of the Strategic Equality Plan is the equality objectives. The Council is required to publish objectives for each of the protected characteristics or to publish reasons why not. It is possible to have equality objectives which benefit a number of protected characteristics. We must justify where we do not have an objective for each protected characteristic.
- 2.3** To formulate our draft equality objectives, we have used national research from the Equality and Human Rights Commission ('Is Wales Fairer? 2018'), taken account of the Welsh Government's draft equality objectives, listened to the views of members of the Equality Consultative Forum, this Committee, met with local groups, consulted widely with organisations representing the needs of protected groups, and consulted with the public and staff on our website and through our social media channels.
- 2.4** We have considered the feedback from this engagement and consultation and have made changes to the original draft objectives. The consultation draft contained four broad objectives which reflected the corporate well-being

objectives. In the final draft (Appendix A), we have maintained the link with the four corporate well-being objectives but have developed ten more focused equality objectives in response to the consultation feedback. We have prioritised the areas where research, information and data indicated there is most disadvantage and where we believe we can have most impact. We believe this to be a realistic approach given the resources available to us.

- 2.5 The Plan must set out the steps the Council intends to take to meet each objective and how progress will be monitored. The Strategic Equality Plan comments on this and there are supporting high-level actions for each of the objectives.
- 2.6 There is also a requirement to publish an equality objective to address any gender pay gap identified or else publish reasons why it has not done so. This must have due regard to the need to have objectives to address the causes of any pay differences that seem reasonably likely to be related to any of the protected characteristics. Our Plan has such an objective.
- 2.7 Once approved, there can be no significant changes to the equality objectives without further engagement with representative groups and approval of those changes.
- 2.8 The Strategic Equality Plan is a live document and is the vehicle for containing information about the equality work that we do. It can be updated on a regular basis as new or updated information becomes available, or we can create links within it to allow people to access the information elsewhere.
- 2.9 The Plan sets out the achievements delivered through the current Strategic Equality Plan and the context within which we work (the population we serve and the resources available to the Council).
- 2.10 The Plan sets out what the corporate vision and values mean in terms of our equality work. These will guide the delivery of the new equality objectives and actions.
- 2.11 The Plan sets out the proposed new strategic equality objectives in the context of our corporate well-being objectives:

Our first Corporate Well-being Objective is **to work with and for our communities**.

Our Strategic Equality Plan links with this by identifying the communities who are most disadvantaged as identified in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and through local engagement.

The following equality objectives link to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective One**

Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Two**

Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Three**

Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Four**

Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Five**

Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.

Our second Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth**.

Our Strategic Equality Plan aims to support learning and employment for protected groups, focusing on those who are most disadvantaged.

The following equality objective links to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Six**

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to improve the progress made by all children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

Our third Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support people at home and in their community**.

The Strategic Equality Plan supports the safety and well-being of people at home and in their community, with particular regard to protected groups identified as disadvantaged in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and our own local information and data.

The following equality objectives link to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Seven**

Develop and implement processes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Eight**

Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Nine**

Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.

Our fourth Corporate Well-being Objective is **to respect, enhance and enjoy our environment**.

The Strategic Equality Plan seeks to ensure our local environment can be enjoyed by a diverse range of people, including disabled people.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Ten**

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

2.12 For each objective, the Plan sets out expected outcomes, high-level actions, and describes how we will know how we are doing.

2.13 As the Plan shows how the equality objectives link to the Council's draft new well-being objectives, it is clear how the Plan contributes to the national well-being goals and is in line with the five ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.14 In April 2020, the Welsh Government is proposing to commence the socio-economic duty under the Equality Act 2010. Whilst we have reflected some consideration of this in the plan, when the guidance related to this duty becomes available, we may need to revise elements of the plan to ensure the Council fully complies with this new duty.

Performance Management & Delivery

2.15 The specific equality duties for Wales require the Council to produce and publish an Annual Equality Monitoring Report. We must do this by 31 March for performance in the previous year. The report must comment on progress made against each of the Council's objectives. The Annual Equality Monitoring Report for 2018-19 will be considered by Scrutiny Committee (Learning & Culture) and Cabinet in March 2020.

- 2.16** We also intend to include references to progress made against meeting the Strategic Equality Objectives in the Annual Delivery Plan reporting arrangements associated with the new Corporate Plan 2020-2025.

Consultation

- 2.17** As part of the development of the Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix A), there has been engagement with a variety of organisations, including those represented on the Equality Consultative Forum. There has also been consultation with a wide range of groups and organisations representing the interests of protected groups and the public. Internally, we have consulted with the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee, officers, trade unions, GLAM (our LGBT Network), and staff. This process, the feedback we received, and our response to it has been described in the engagement and consultation report in Appendix C.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The draft Strategic Equality Plan links its objectives with the corporate well-being objectives thereby contributing to the national Well-being Goals as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act through the delivery of the equality objectives contained in the plan.
- 3.2** The Plan has been developed in accordance with the five ways of working and they are also reflected in the content of the plan. There is a strong emphasis on collaboration as the Council recognises the need to work with partners to deliver services and improve local well-being. The Plan reflects the importance of prevention and this has been a strong theme in much of the engagement to date. The Plan will be a four year plan but the draft recognises that many of the issues are even longer term, for example, deprivation, an ageing population, community safety, and diversity in employment.
- 3.3** The involvement of partners and stakeholders in the development and delivery of the plan is critical to its success as is the need to work in a more integrated way, recognising the connections across Council services and with other partners.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The Council's Strategic Equality Plan reflects the Council's priorities for the next four

years and this informs the way resources are allocated, whilst also taking account of the availability of resources to deliver it.

- 4.2** The outcome of the Council’s budget consultation and revenue settlement from the Welsh Government will inform the content and extent of delivery of the plan in coming years.

Employment

- 4.3** There are no direct employment implications associated with this report. Cabinet will note that there are specific equality objectives relating to employment and personnel matters as described in the body of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.4** There are no direct legal implications associated with this report. The requirement to produce and publish a set of equality objectives is a requirement of the specific duties for Wales under the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment can be found in Appendix B.

- 4.5** The Equality Act 2010 created a public sector equality duty and came into force in April 2011. The duty covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Under the general duty, public sector organisations must have due regards to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups;
- foster good relations between different groups.

- 4.6** The duty to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnership.

- 4.7** The Equality Act gives Welsh Ministers the power to impose specific duties through regulations. The specific duties are legal requirements designed to help public bodies meet the general duty. These were published in April 2011.

- 4.8** The Equality and Human Rights Commission published guidance on the public sector equality duty for Wales in June 2011. It performs a regulatory role to ensure that listed bodies comply with the duty. It carries out an annual monitoring exercise each year to assess the performance of public bodies against the duty.

5. Background Papers

Reference from Cabinet, Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee,
C144 Draft Vale of Glamorgan Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24, 5th December 2019
https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny-LC/2019/19-12-05/Ref-from-Cab-Draft-VoG-Strategic-Equality-Plan.pdf



Working together for a fairer future

The Vale of Glamorgan Council's
Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024

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Working together for a fairer future

The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024

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Introduction

It is with a great deal of pride that we introduce the Council’s Strategic Equality Plan for 2020 - 2024 – **‘Working together for a fairer future’**.

Councils play an important role in ensuring essential services reach every member of our society, taking into account a range of needs. This Plan sets out the equality agenda for the Vale of Glamorgan Council for the next four years. With partners and stakeholders, we look forward to working together to deliver our vision of a fairer future.

It is only by working together, listening and respecting each other that we can successfully meet the many challenges facing our communities and public services today. To achieve this Plan and to meet the diverse needs of our communities, we will need to work in partnership. This partnership working is wide ranging. It includes working with families, children and young people, our partners in health, the Police and the Fire service, as well other public sector bodies, the third sector, Town and Community Councils, our trade union colleagues, and our communities.

In this Plan, we present our strategic equality objectives in the context of the Council’s four new well-being objectives. We believe these complement each other and that collectively they will deliver our local well-being outcomes and the seven national well-being goals:

Draft Well-being Objectives	Draft Strategic Equality Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with and for our communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions. • Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually. • Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and

	<p>young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024. • Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to improve the progress made by all children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support people at home and in their community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement processes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. • Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups. • Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

The Vale of Glamorgan is a diverse area comprising very different communities with different aspirations, needs and concerns. Our Plan sets out how the Council will work to meet those needs, address concerns and help people of all protected groups achieve their aspirations. Whether you live or work in one of our towns or in one of our more rural communities, we will continue to strive to make life better and to play our part in addressing the issues that affect the people living, working, and visiting here.

We are an ambitious and forward-thinking authority. Together we are confident that staff, elected members, the community and all those with a stake in the Vale can continue 'working together for a fairer future'. In this way, we can ensure we all achieve 'Strong Communities with a Bright Future'.

Councillor Neil Moore

Rob Thomas

Leader

Managing Director

Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan

The purpose of this Strategic Equality Plan is to describe what the Council is doing to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (general duty) and the specific duties for Wales.

The public sector equality duty covers eight protected characteristics:

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

The duty applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only for having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

The Equality Act lists councils as public authorities with certain duties. This means that when we carry out our public function, we must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics;

- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The specific duties set out the steps that public authorities in Wales must take to demonstrate that they are paying due regard to the general duty. They cover:

Objectives	Staff training
Strategic Equality Plans	Procurement
Engagement	Annual reporting
Assessing impact	Publishing
Equality information	Welsh Ministers' reporting
Employment information	Review
Pay differences	Accessibility

This Strategic Equality Plan explains what action we take, and plan to take, to meet these duties.

To identify the priorities, we have used research from the Equality & Human Rights Commission and feedback from residents and organisations working in the Vale of Glamorgan. We have also taken into account the draft strategic equality objectives of the Welsh Government. We plan to use this information to help us improve the way we provide services and employ people.

Context

The world is changing rapidly and the context for this Plan is very different to what it was in 2016. What remains the same is the need for the Council to engage with the community and plan for the future, to work with our partners and embrace change. We must also consider how our actions and decisions will affect future generations.

Opportunities and experiences vary across the area with people living in some areas experiencing disadvantage and deprivation. In addition to this we have an ageing population and we need to ensure that services can meet the changing needs of the population as they grow older. We need to think about what services we provide and how we provide them. We must consider the diverse needs of the population whether that be due to their protected characteristics, financial circumstances, or one of the many other reasons that can affect what services and support people need.

The Vale of Glamorgan and our Council

We want to make sure that everyone in the Vale of Glamorgan has fair and equal access to these services. We also want them to receive fair and consistent treatment in their dealings and employment with us.

The principles described in the general duty must underpin the wide range of services that we provide. These include housing, education, social care, and libraries as well as looking after our coast, parks and gardens.

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020–2024 has been written to link with the recently revised Corporate Plan 2020-2025.

The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision for the Vale of Glamorgan, our values and our main priorities. The priorities of the Corporate Plan will help make communities in the Vale of

Glamorgan more equal. The equality objectives in this Strategic Equality Plan will support this work and it is for this reason that the objectives of both plans have been aligned.

Vision and values

Our Council's vision is '**Strong communities with a bright future**'.

We have a set of corporate values that underpin our work: ambitious; open; together; and proud. Here are what they mean when we are thinking about equality and working together to build a fairer future.

Ambitious Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future.

For equality, this means supporting people to achieve their potential and a good life for themselves whatever their background or protected characteristics.

Open Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take.

For equality, this means talking to people and organisations that can help us understand the issues and barriers for people with protected characteristics. We can then take these into account when we are making our decisions.

Together Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.

For equality, this means working with partners to deliver services that meet the diverse needs of our residents and communities.

Proud Proud of the Vale of Glamorgan: proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

For equality, this means that everybody feels that they are living in a community where they feel included, can be proud of who they are and the part they play in making the Vale of Glamorgan a good place to live.

Our values are consistent with the five ways of working central to the Well-being of Future Generations Act. They are long term, they work together, and involve working with others. Our values will support a greater focus on prevention as we work to deliver our vision.

Our equality priorities take into account the Well-being of Future Generations Act and in particular will help us to contribute to the Welsh Government's well-being goals, including creating a more equal Wales.

Developing this Plan

A variety of sources have been used to gather the information needed to produce this plan and the equality objectives. These include:

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission's national research reports 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018 (an update on previous research in 'Is Wales Fairer? 2015' and 'How Fair is Wales? 2011');
- information from Council documents such as the Corporate Plan;
- local information and data;
- consultation;
- feedback from people representative of one or more of the protected groups through engagement and consultation between May 2019 and January 2020;
- draft equality objectives of the Welsh Government;
- information from the Equality and Human Rights Commission Wales.

This information, together with national evidence from research, has shaped the action that will be taken to achieve the Council's equality objectives between 2020 and 2024.

The following information about the local population provides some of the context for what needs to be achieved. This data is drawn from a range of external sources including the Office for National Statistics, Data Cymru and Stats Wales.

The most robust data available for the Vale of Glamorgan is data from the 2011 Census. More up-to-date data is available for the Vale of Glamorgan from the Annual Population Survey 2019. Data is available for a number of protected characteristics at a regional level from the Annual Population Survey, this data is presented for 2015-2017. Both the Census and Annual Population Survey are produced by the Office for National Statistics.

Equality Data

Ethnicity

The 2011 Census estimated that 126,336 people lived in the Vale of Glamorgan. Of these, the majority, 121,838 (96%) identified as White. 1,695 (1.3%) identified as Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, 1,967 (1.5%) identified as Asian or Asian British, 489 (0.3%) identified as Black, African, Caribbean, or Black British and 347 (0.2%) from other ethnic groups.

Data is available for the Vale of Glamorgan from the Annual Population Survey for 2019. It is estimated that 4,200 (3.3%) residents of the Vale of Glamorgan were Black, Asian and minority ethnic.

Nationality

Respondents are able to select multiple answers in response to the question of nationality in the Census. The 2011 Census estimated that the majority of residents in the Vale of Glamorgan identified as English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, or British. (2.4 %) identified as another nationality only.

Data is available for the Vale of Glamorgan from the Annual Population Survey for 2019. It is estimated that 77,400 (61%) identified as Welsh and 49,500 (39%) as non-Welsh.

Main Language

According to the 2011 Census, 52,443 (98%) of households have English or Welsh as a main language, and 393 (0.7%) of households have no people in the household with English or Welsh as a main language.

Data is available for the Vale of Glamorgan from the Annual Population Survey for 2019. It is estimated that 21% are Welsh speakers.

Disability

The 2011 Census estimated that 13,091 (10%) of the Vale of Glamorgan residents' day to day activities were limited a little. 12,538 (10%) of residents' day to day activities were limited a lot.

Data is available at a regional level for Wales and is based on the Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey. For South East Wales between 2015 to 2017, it was estimated that 206,700 (22%) of people were disabled.

Age

The 2018 mid-year population estimates based on the 2011 Census estimated the population of the Vale of Glamorgan to be 132,165. It is estimated that the majority of the population, 80,023 (61%), were aged 16-64, 27,691 (21%) were aged 65 and over, and 24,451 (18%) were aged 0-15.

Gender

The 2018 mid-year population estimates based on the 2011 Census estimated that 68,043 (51%) of the population were female and 64,122 (49%) were male.

Gender Reassignment

No reliable data is available on gender identity. In December 2018, the UK Government published a White Paper laying out the UK Statistics Authority's proposals for the conduct and content of the 2021 Census. The proposals include a recommendation for the inclusion of a voluntary gender identity question to be asked of those aged 16 years and over.

Sexual Orientation

There is no data on sexual orientation available for the Vale of Glamorgan area. Data is available at a regional level for Wales and is based on Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey. For South East Wales between 2015 to 2017, it is estimated that 1,155,500 (95.8%) people aged 16 and over identified as heterosexual or straight, 18,200 (1.5%) as gay or lesbian, 9,500 (0.8) as bisexual, and 23,500 (1.9%) did not respond.

Religion or Belief

Data is available at a regional level for Wales and is based on Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey produced by the Office for National Statistics. Between 2015 to 2017, for South East Wales it is estimated that the majority, 726,300 (48%) people were Christian, 689,000 (46%) people were of no religion, 34,000 (2.2%) were Muslim, 41,300 (2.7%) were of any other religion and 3,200 (0.2%) did not respond.

Marital Status

There is no data on marital status available for just the Vale of Glamorgan. Data is available at a regional level for Wales and is based on Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey produced by the Office for National Statistics. Between 2015 to 2017, for South East Wales it is estimated that the majority, 574,700 (47%) people were Married or in a Civil Partnership, 433,300 (36%) were Single, 125,300 (10%) were Divorced, Separated or Dissolved Civil Partnership, and 81,400 (7%) were Widowed or Surviving Civil Partnership.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Little data is available on pregnancy and maternity. In 2015, the most up-to-date data available, there were 1,333 live births in the Vale of Glamorgan. According to the Office of National Statistics, for England and Wales conception rates for women of all ages in 2017 were 76.1 per 1000.

Socio-economic

- 13% of people are estimated to be living in income deprivation – below the Welsh average of 16%.
- Real differences can be observed between areas. In some more deprived areas, it is estimated that 38% of people are living in income deprivation.
- For some more deprived areas, it is estimated that 53% of children are living in poverty.
- 80.4% of the working age population are in employment, 3.4% are unemployed.
- The percentage of people employed is higher than the Welsh average of 73.1%.

Working to support equality

Our Council

The information below provides some key facts about the Council, its resources and how the organisation works to support equality.

- To support the services we deliver, the Council relies on a skilled workforce that includes teachers, engineers and social workers.
- In total, the Council employs over 5,000 staff, including those employed in schools.
- In the 2018 Staff Survey, 74% of respondents reported they were proud to work for the Council, 70% said they would recommend the Council as a place to work.

- There are 57 schools across the Vale of Glamorgan, including 7 Welsh Medium schools.
- The Council has 3,829 homes.
- There are 47 elected councillors including the Cabinet, made-up of the Leader of the Council and six other Councillors.

It is clear that the public sector will go through a period of significant change over the next five years. How we work, what is expected of us and the level of resource available to us will be subject to many changes.

Our duty is to ensure that we continue to deliver services to the most vulnerable members of our community, that young people have the best start in life and that the Vale is safe, clean and an area where people still want to live, work and visit.

The objectives and actions detailed in this Strategic Equality Plan provide the framework for our activities over the next four years, working with and for our local communities to meet their diverse needs and aspirations.

Training

We provide equality training so that staff know how to provide a fair service that meets the needs of the diverse range of people using it. The corporate training provided includes:

- Equality awareness
- Equality impact assessment
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual awareness
- Transgender awareness
- Race awareness

- British Sign Language awareness

In addition to the equality training programme, equality issues are covered in other corporate training, such as recruitment training. The equality training programme is kept under review to cover a range of protected characteristics.

Assessing Impact

A process is in place to evaluate the likely impact on protected groups of policies or practices being proposed, reviewed or revised. The process helps the Council to consider the impact of our work on each of the protected groups.

Staff are encouraged to collect and analyse data to see how people are using Council services. We try to improve on this each year by increasing the number of services that collect data and encouraging better analysis of data. Staff can use this information as part of their evidence base in equality impact assessments.

This process is used, for example, to assess the likely impact of policies and practices including the Corporate Plan and the annual budget. We think about whether there is a risk that our decisions are likely to have a significant impact on protected groups. If we can see that there might be one, we carry out a full assessment of impact.

Where there is a significant impact, details are published on the Council's website.

Examples of good practice

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different people. We carry out a wide range of work that contributes to this.

Here are some examples of our work.

- We have annual programmes of work with Show Racism the Red Card to promote awareness of race issues amongst children in schools and workshops.
- We work with partners to provide job opportunities.
- We hold an annual Holocaust Memorial Day event.
- We are working towards higher levels of the Inspoort disability standards. We have been awarded the Bronze standard. We are now working towards the Silver standard.
- We have a Gypsy and Traveller Forum that can quickly respond to assess the welfare needs of Gypsies and Travellers when they arrive in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- We support the Vale 50+ Forum. This is a very active public engagement group that offers a voice for people over 50 years of age.
- The Vale of Glamorgan's largest town, Barry, has been awarded 'Dementia Friendly Town' status by the Alzheimer's Society. We have an active steering group to make sure we achieve our action plan. We have a significant number of trained Dementia friends.
- We have a digital inclusion working group developing a strategy to get more people on line. Our library staff are digital champions who are able to help the public with their queries. The public can access computer suites in libraries. The Adult Community Learning team and libraries offer a range of digital inclusion training programmes. We have improved wi-fi access in sheltered homes and plan on doing this in care homes.
- We provide Greenlinks community transport in rural and urban areas. This includes buses that can be used easily by disabled people. Greenlinks helps people without transport to access services and to interact socially.

- We provide a bus to Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern, a grass roots community support service. This helps to transport people to a new medical centre which is not easily accessible.
- We have TREV (The Reassurance and Engagement Vehicle) that helps us take information about safety out into the community.
- We have an annual leave purchase scheme in place and are piloting changes to our flex time system to give staff greater flexibility in managing their work-life balance.

We are committed to continuing with this work. More examples can be found in our [annual equality reports](#) published on our website.

Equality objectives – achievements

Between 2016 and 2020, good progress was made against each of the eight equality objectives. The following provides a summary of what has been done for each. The learning from this activity has helped identify and inform the strategic equality objectives for the next four years.

Equality Objective 1:

Collect and analyse service data by protected characteristic so services meet the diverse needs of the public

We have increased the number of services collecting and analysing data by protected characteristic. Services look at this information to see how they can improve services for people in protected groups. Services are also able to use this information when they are thinking about the equality impact of changes to their services.

More information about this can be found in the Annual Equality Monitoring Reports on the Council's website.

Equality Objective 2:

Close attainment gaps of children in protected groups

Our focus has been on the attainment of the following groups: Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Pupils; children who are looked after by our local authority; children with additional learning needs; pupils eligible for free school meals; and pupils learning English as an Additional Language. Generally, performance outcomes have been good and compare well with peers across Wales. A gap still exists for pupils eligible for free school meals and narrowing this remains a priority.

School Exclusions

The percentage of vulnerable pupils excluded from Vale mainstream schools has remained consistent over the last 2 years. In 2017 / 18, there was a slight decrease in exclusions of pupils with special educational needs and a slight increase in exclusions of pupils with English as an additional language. More boys than girls were excluded during 2017 / 18. Boys are approximately 4 times more likely to be excluded than girls.

In secondary schools, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs that were excluded reduced by more than 10% between 2016/17 and 2017/18. Rates of other groups remained similar over the same period.

In primary schools, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs excluded increased by nearly 10% between 2016/17 and 2017/18. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language that were excluded nearly doubled over the same period.

Alongside the Council's schools, the Behaviour Improvement Team, the Youth Service, the Educational Psychology Service, and the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Outreach Team from Ysgol y Deri all work to support pupils who may be at risk of exclusion.

Equality Objective 3:

Make public documents easier for people to read and understand

The Council raises awareness of plain language guides. A plain language and style guide is available for staff to refer to on the Council's intranet. There is also a guide to grammar, a plain language dictionary, and a guide to punctuation.

An e-learning module covers the essentials of plain language. It provides information on planning in advance, avoiding complex language, being clear and shows examples.

We are developing a core competency framework. We have a communication competency which will include using plain language. Assessment against this competency will take place during the appraisal process. There will be support for further learning where required.

Equality Objective 4:

Help staff know more about equality law, and staff and the public to understand the needs of protected groups

Equality awareness training continues to be offered. This includes equality impact assessment training and raising awareness of the needs of specific groups such as the deaf community. E-learning training modules are also available. These cover equality awareness, equality impact assessments, and transgender awareness.

Raising public awareness through social media, events and working with other organisations continues and has featured issues such as mental health, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability.

Equality Objective 5:

Seek the views of protected groups on proposed changes to policy, budgets and services

An equality impact assessment process in place. This has been reviewed and relaunched, with links to guidance, examples, and research to help officers carry out effective assessments.

The Council's Communications Team that provides advice on engagement to Services. The Communication Team keeps a list of organisations that we can talk to about the needs of protected groups to assist in this process. This helps services to find out about the views and needs of protected groups so that these shape policies, decisions and services.

Examples of equality impact assessments can be found on our website. You can read about how the engagement process works in the Communications report our Annual Equality Monitoring Report on our website.

Equality Objective 6:

Encourage people with protected characteristics to report hate crimes, harassment and discrimination

Community Cohesion

The Council coordinates a Community Cohesion Group with members from the community and representatives from the Community Safety Team, South Wales Police, and the Police Youth Volunteers. It meets quarterly to monitor and respond to tensions in the Vale as part of a multi-agency partnership.

The Community Cohesion Group has put in place a development plan and uses online and social media platforms to get information about what is happening in the community. It has made links with new partner organisations.

The Community Cohesion Group looks at reports on hate crime every three months. These reports include information on protected characteristics. They also have data and case studies on anti-social behaviour, stop and search, and the use of force. The Community Cohesion Co-Ordinator and the Hate Crime Officer meet regularly to monitor tensions in the community. The South Wales Hate Crime Officer has delivered outreach sessions in schools and prisons to promote awareness of hate crime and how to report incidents.

The Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff CONTEST (Counter Terrorism) Boards have merged. The CONTEST Board makes sure that key officers understand potential community tensions and trends concerning extremism. In summer 2018, the Board agreed to develop a regional 'Channel' process. 'Channel' is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour. 'Channel' works in a similar way to existing safeguarding partnerships aimed at protecting vulnerable people. This will help it share expertise across the region and support the exchange of resources and information. In turn, this will develop a better understanding of regional trends.

The Regional Community Cohesion and Community Engagement Unit supported Glamorgan Cricket to secure funding to deliver workshops for young people. They received funding through the support of the Counter Extremism department of the Home Office, under their 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' programme. This has resourced a series of 'Beyond the Boundaries' workshops, focusing on a range of themes connected to hate crime, human rights, and extremism.

The Regional Community Cohesion Co-Ordinator provided feedback to the All-Wales Race Equality Forum regarding the Welsh Government's future race-related hate crime fund. The Co-ordinator worked collaboratively with eligible organisations to develop local bids to ensure victims of hate crime are supported appropriately.

In 2019 - 2021, the Community Cohesion Group's work to prevent hate crime within the Vale will be further developed by the newly appointed Cohesion Officer, based in the Community Safety Team at Barry Police Station.

Anti-bullying in schools

The Council works with our schools to reduce bullying. We focus on vulnerable groups who are more likely to be victims of bullying. We have achieved this by:

- providing schools with a wellbeing 'capacity building tool' with good practice to deal with bullying;
- monitoring bullying incidents school by school;
- sharing this information with Challenge Advisers;
- monitoring bullying incidents by protected characteristics;
- developing a model anti-bullying policy which all schools have adopted;
- support and challenge visits to schools to look at data, with review visits if necessary;
- suggestions for activities for anti-bullying week;
- safeguarding training to all schools, including information on bullying and on-line bullying;
- development of a Transgender Toolkit to provide guidance to schools on the risk of bullying for this group of young people, outlining how schools can prevent this.

These elements have a clear focus on children and young people feeling safe in schools.

Data on the number of incidents of bullying by protected characteristics is collected and monitored to identify if there are trends that need to be dealt with. However, no trends from the current data have been identified which need action. This indicates that the range of interventions in use are working. However, we recognise that national and UK data shows that certain groups are more at risk of bullying:

- pupils with Additional Learning Needs;

- disabled pupils;
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils;
- ethnic minority pupils;
- pupils from a religious background.

The Council will continue to work closely with schools so that there is awareness and measures are taken to deal with bullying.

Show Racism the Red Card and Stonewall Cymru have delivered training which highlights that children and young people often have a number of protected characteristics and that this increases vulnerability to bullying. This is an area we will seek to develop in future.

The challenges have been as follows:

- ensuring that all schools complete the bullying return on a termly basis;
- developing a common understanding of what constitutes bullying;
- our capacity to monitor anti-bullying procedures in schools;
- the number of reported incidents of identity-based bullying is low.

The support the Council has provided to schools has helped them to support children and young people. The schools' inspectorate, Estyn, has recognised this. Of the schools it inspected since 2016, Estyn rated 98% of them as either good or excellent for Wellbeing and Care Support and Guidance.

Equality Objective 7:

Find new ways of reaching victims of domestic abuse and raise awareness of domestic abuse services in the community

The Council has recently worked with Cardiff and Vale Health Board to develop a Regional Strategy for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence 2018-2023. This sets out how partners will shape and deliver responses to all forms of domestic abuse and sexual violence across the region. The vision is that people who live, work, study in, and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, have the opportunity to live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.

We work in partnership with the Specialist Domestic Services - Atal Y Fro and the Council's Supporting People Team. Together we ensure that victims of domestic abuse have access to help, support, and protection. This includes: refuge, second stage and dispersed housing; and counselling access to relevant programmes, including outreach support.

We signpost to specialist services when required such as BAWSO, DYN Project, Rainbow Bridge and Live Fear Free.

Training and awareness raising days and activities are arranged and widely advertised across the Vale of Glamorgan. For example, campaigns and awareness events are run throughout the year and are targeted around certain events in the calendar such as the White Ribbon campaign, International Women's Day, 16 days of action, PRIDE, Safeguarding Week. We focus on relevant topics about violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. These campaigns are face to face, engaging service users, conferences, social media, radio, television and the press. Information will also be on leaflets, letter heads, and emails.

Atal y Fro advertises its services through social media, press, and awareness training events. It works with statutory and third sector organisations to ensure their services are advertised to as many people as possible including the rural Vale.

Quarterly and annual reports to Welsh Government are submitted on the Regional Delivery Plan. We report on progress with the Cardiff and Vale Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Strategy 2018- 2023. This report includes information on protected characteristics. We also report to the Community Safety Partnership.

The Council actively supports the work of the Vale 50+ Forum to increase visibility and services across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Equality Objective 8:

Reduce the gender pay gap and improve employment opportunities for protected groups

Data is collected by protected characteristic and reported annually in the Council's Employment Information Report. This is part of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report (Appendix 5), published on the Council's website.

We collate, report and publish our Annual Employee Pay Policy. This provides a framework to make sure that our employees are paid fairly and objectively and ensures it is an open and transparent process.

The Council supports young people leaving care so they can to access work experience and apprenticeship routes to support their continued career development. This has concentrated mainly on improving the employment rates of young people who are underrepresented in our workplace.

We work with young people, older people, redundant workers, single parents, and disabled people. In this context, the Council continues to hold its "Disability Confident" status and works with the local Job Centre Plus to undertake core actions. For example, training and work experience opportunities for people who have protective characteristics and /or who are long term unemployed are provided.

We have provided a work experience opportunity to a young person through Stonewall's scheme for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people.

The Council has a workforce plan which contains actions to ensure the Council's employees reflect that of the community. This includes actions to reduce the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap has reduced in recent years:

- On 31 March 2016, the gender pay gap was 8.88%.
- On 31 March 2017, the gender pay gap was 8.81%.
- On 31 March 2018, the gender pay gap was 8.01%.
- On 31 March 2019, the gender pay gap was 5.48 %
- On 31 December 2019, the gender pay gap was 4.57%

This has been achieved in a variety of ways.

The Living Wage was introduced in April 2016. This was enhanced by the Council determining to stop using the lowest pay point within its structure. This impacted more beneficially for women in the workforce.

There has been a significant change in the gender balance of Chief Officers. There is now a more even balance. Most of the Chief Officer appointments were made following a competitive process in which internal applicants were successful. This is testament to the Council's management development and succession planning.

There has been a significant change in the gender balance of Chief Officers. There is a more even gender balance (one more female than male) which has resulted in a significant change in the gender pay gap.

The Council has attended school, college, university and local careers job fairs to promote the range of career and jobs in the Council. This has a focus on removing job and career stereotypes and challenging people's ideas about the sorts of jobs open to them.

The appraisal system has been revised. This provides an opportunity for staff to put forward ideas about developing their potential. They can explore development opportunities for themselves that will fit with business needs. This has been complemented by the Council's Leadership Café which promotes the personal development of employees, helps them to network and to break down barriers.

Attracting more young people to work with us is a priority as the proportion of young staff that we employ does not reflect the proportion of young people in our community. The use of apprenticeships is a key measure to support this objective. The Council has offered, and continues to offer, a number of foundation apprenticeships to young people who are 16 - 24 years old. There are 23 apprentices currently in the Council. From April 2017 to March 2018, we employed apprentices mainly on an agency basis. From March 2018, we employed apprentices directly.

It is intended to continue attending school, college, university, and local careers job fairs to continue to promote the range of careers and jobs we have in the Council. Focus will remain on removing the job and career stereotypes and preconceptions that many people have.

Progress on this work is reported each year in the Council's Employment Information Report which forms a part of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report published on our website.

Equality objectives – what we will do

The Council has identified a number of actions to take over the next four years between 2020 and 2024.

We believe that many of these equality objectives will benefit all protected groups and cut across protected characteristics. As we work towards them, we make progress in meeting the general duty. We will continue to improve our understanding of what we need to do to meet the needs of protected groups.

However, given that we have increasingly limited resources, we have chosen to focus on those areas where research, data, and experience tell us that there is most need.

This section provides more information about each of our 2020–2024 equality objectives, why we have chosen them, what we are seeking to achieve and the activities we will take to deliver them.

Our previous equality objectives have had more of an internal focus. This reflected the need to establish, develop, or improve systems to collect data on the protected characteristics of our service users and to engage with them. This has helped us to understand who our service users are and to identify gaps in service provision. This practice is now better established.

The focus now needs to shift to looking at how this information and awareness raising will improve outcomes for protected groups. We need to use our knowledge and experience to continue to improve our understanding of people's diverse needs and any barriers to our services that might exist.

We have chosen to link our equality objectives with the corporate well-being objectives. This aligns the Council's work in these areas and mainstreams our work on tackling areas where there is most pressing disadvantage.

Our first Corporate Well-being Objective is **to work with and for our communities**.

Our Strategic Equality Plan links with this by identifying the communities who are most disadvantaged as identified in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and through local engagement.

The following equality objectives link to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective One**

Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Two**

Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Three**

Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Four**

Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Five**

Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.

Our second Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth**.

Our Strategic Equality Plan aims to support learning and employment for protected groups, focusing on those who are most disadvantaged.

The following equality objective links to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Six**

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to improve the progress made by all children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

Our third Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support people at home and in their community.**

The Strategic Equality Plan supports the safety and well-being of people at home and in their community, with particular regard to protected groups identified as disadvantaged in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and our own local information and data.

The following equality objectives link to this well-being objective.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Seven**

Develop and implement processes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Eight**

Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Nine**

Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.

Our fourth Corporate Well-being Objective is **to respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.**

The Strategic Equality Plan seeks to ensure our local environment can be enjoyed by a diverse range of people, including disabled people.

- **Strategic Equality Objective Ten**

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

These equality objectives support our work to achieve the five ways of working and contribute to our well-being objectives as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Strategic Equality Plan has been developed in accordance with the five ways of working and they are also reflected in the content of the plan. There is strong emphasis on collaboration as the council recognises the need to work with partners to deliver services and improve local well-being. The plan reflects the importance of prevention and this has been a strong theme in much of the engagement to date. This is a four year plan but we recognise that many of the issues are even longer term.

The following section sets out our equality objectives in the context of our corporate well-being objectives.

For each objective, we comment on the protected characteristics to which it relates, the expected outcomes, actions, and how we will know how we are doing.

In the information on protected characteristics, we have used information from the Equality and Human Rights Commission's research report 'Is Wales Fairer 2018'. The findings of this report is set out in sections or domains so we have included in brackets the section from which we have taken this information.

Our first Corporate Well-being Objective is **to work with and for our communities**.

Our Strategic Equality Plan links with this by identifying the communities who are most disadvantaged as identified in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and through local engagement.

Strategic Equality Objective One

- Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups, but we will focus on disabled, people from ethnic minorities, women and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

These are the groups identified as being most disadvantaged in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018'.
(Work)

Expected outcomes

Identified improvements in place.

Stakeholders have information about the improvements and the opportunity for input to support progress.

Actions

1. Identify how the Council currently involves, engages, and communicates with protected groups.
2. Provide advice and training to Services on data analysis.
3. Put in place action plans for improvement.
4. Put in place a communication plan to engage with and update stakeholders on progress.

5. Review how the Equalities Consultative Forum operates and its interface with relevant Council Champions by July 2020.

How we will know how we are doing

1. Range of organisations we engage with is representative of the needs of protected groups.
2. Information and data on how engagement has been used to improve outcomes for protected groups and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.
3. Information and data on the number of front-line staff who have received equality, race, and disability training.
4. Information and data on the results of staff and service user satisfaction surveys by protected characteristic, including how feedback has been used to improve outcomes for protected groups and socio-economically disadvantaged groups.

Strategic Equality Objective Two

Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually.

Protected characteristics

This benefits women and ethnic minorities, groups which 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' identifies as experiencing pay gaps. (Work)

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that a gender pay gap persists in Wales, despite a small narrowing of the gap. Median hourly earnings were higher for men in Wales (£11.36) than women (£9.80) in 2016/17, representing a 13.7% gender pay gap.

The Council has achieved a significant reduction in the gender pay gap which in early 2020 is under 5%.

The Council is starting to establish systems so that it can report on the ethnic minority pay gap and to identify appropriate actions.

Expected outcomes

Gender pay gap continues to improve.

The Council identifies if there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities and takes appropriate action if this is the case.

Actions

1. Continue to monitor gender pay gap every month.

2. Establish process to monitor pay gap for ethnic minorities to identify pay gap.
3. Monitor pay gap for ethnic minorities every month.
4. Progress actions as part of the Council's People Strategy to address where possible issues relating to gender and ethnic minorities pay gaps.

How we will know how we are doing

Information and data on pay gaps, particularly for gender and race.

Strategic Equality Objective Three

Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups but the Council will look at how it can remove barriers to employment, apprenticeships, and work experience for disabled people and young people.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' identifies disabled people as falling further behind in employment. They are under-represented in apprenticeships, and their employment rate is less than half that of non-disabled people. (Work)

Local engagement confirmed that disabled people would like barriers removed to take up flexible employment opportunities.

The Council has identified that there is an under-representation of young people in its workforce.

Expected outcomes

Increase in rates of employment for disabled people and young people across jobs, apprenticeships, and work experience.

Stronger links with the disabled community so that they are aware of the work opportunities available in a timely way.

Continued links with young people's groups such as the Vale Youth Cabinet.

Actions

1. Work with local groups to identify barriers to taking up work opportunities by March 2021.
2. Take action to address barriers and create more opportunity for employment by October 2021.
3. Engage regularly with local disabled and young people's groups to discuss progress.

How we will know how we are doing

Information and data on the diversity of our staff, including internal progression, explaining how improvements have been achieved.

Strategic Equality Objective Four

Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024.

Protected characteristics

This will benefit all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that the number of women gaining employment in higher paid roles has increased and the gender pay gap has narrowed. However, evidence shows high levels of bullying, harassment and negative experiences in the workplace, including sexual harassment and discrimination as a result of pregnancy or maternity. (Work)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people are more likely to experience discrimination in the workplace (Stonewall's 'LGBT in Britain – Work Report (2018)'). The Council continues to be a member of Stonewall's Workplace Diversity Programme.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that disabled people's employment rate in Wales is less than half that for non-disabled people. (Work)

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that apprenticeships remain strongly gender segregated. Ethnic minorities and disabled people are under-represented in apprenticeships. (Work)

Expected outcomes

Improved score in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index.

'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace: Recommendations for change' report is considered and acted on as appropriate.

Increased staff awareness of sexual harassment policy and completion of training.

Improved staff engagement through engagement and innovation groups and the Learning Café.

Recruitment processes in place that challenge gender stereotypes.

Actions

1. Improve lesbian, gay, bi, and trans inclusion in the workplace and measure progress through the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index every year.
2. Progress the six areas of action to address pregnancy and maternity discrimination as set out in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace: Recommendations for change' report by March 2024.
3. Promote the Council's sexual harassment policy and e-learning training opportunities by March 2021, monitoring and reporting on training completion rates.
4. Hold regular meetings of the Corporate Engagement and Innovation Forum with staff to encourage wellbeing and good working practices, innovation, and improved communication.
5. Hold regular meetings of Local Engagement and Innovation Groups to increase the ability of staff to influence the direction of the Council.
6. Hold regular meetings of the Learning Café - the Council's network for sharing ideas, promoting best practice, equipping staff with the skills and knowledge to cope with workplace challenges, and supporting career progression.
7. Promote employment opportunities in a way that challenges gender stereotypes.

How we will know how we are doing

Staff satisfaction surveys.

Action plans from staff Engagement and Innovation groups.

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

Workforce data.

Strategic Equality Objective Five

Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that women remain under-represented and there is limited data on other groups such as disabled people and ethnic minorities. (Participation)

Expected outcomes

Councillors have up to date knowledge of equality issues to inform decision making.

Equality and LGBT Champions supporting priority equality issues such as improvement in inclusivity of workplace.

Actions

1. Provide all Councillors with equality training by July 2022.
2. Engage with elected member Equality and LGBT Champions to identify how and where they can confidently support equality issues.

How we will know how we are doing

Number of elected members who have completed equality training.

Range of equality issues supported by elected member Equality and LGBT Champions.

Our second Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth.**

Our Strategic Equality Plan aims to support learning and employment for protected groups, focusing on those who are most disadvantaged.

We want residents to have a fair opportunity to become well-educated, skilled, and to achieve their potential as they develop and learn. We are committed to encouraging people's ambitions and to ensuring that individuals and communities can prosper and achieve their best.

Strategic Equality Objective Six

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to improve the progress made by all children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that attainment gaps persist for pupils in receipt of free school meals and children with additional learning needs. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that young women and girls, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children and children with additional learning needs are more likely to be at risk of experiencing identity-based bullying. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that poorer children, children with additional learning needs, White children and children of mixed ethnicity have higher than average exclusion rates. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that subject choices remain highly gendered, with girls being much less likely to continue studying science and mathematics after school. (Education)

Expected outcomes

Increase in the percentage of pupils with protected characteristics and who are socio-economically disadvantaged who make expected or higher than expected progress.

Programmes in place to tackle identity-based bullying.

Reduced exclusion rates for children with certain protected characteristics, including disabled children and mixed ethnicity children.

Actions

1. Deliver and evaluate programmes and interventions aimed at improving attainment outcomes to make sure they have a positive impact on socio-economic disadvantage, disability, sex, race, other protected characteristics and young carers.
2. Seek to minimise exclusion rates for children with certain protected characteristics, including socio-economic disadvantage, ethnicity and disability.
3. Analyse bullying data gathered by schools, including racist bullying, to identify trends and review anti-bullying strategies so that there are effective solutions in place.
4. Work with partners to deliver programmes which support people to prepare for employment.

How we will know how we are doing

1. Information and data on how programmes and interventions have impacted on the progress of children and young people with protected characteristics and who are socio-economically disadvantaged.
2. Information and data on number of children excluded by protected characteristic and socio-economic disadvantage.
3. Analysis of school bullying data showing trends and review of anti-bullying strategies to address findings.
4. Information and data on outcomes of programmes supporting people to prepare for employment.

Our third Corporate Well-being Objective is **to support people at home and in their community.**

The Strategic Equality Plan supports the safety and well-being of people at home and in their community, with particular regard to protected groups identified as disadvantaged in 'Is Wales Fairer 2018' and our own local information and data.

We work in partnership to make sure people are safe at home and in the community and can make choices that support their overall well-being. We give people the necessary advice, care and support when they need it.

Strategic Equality Objective Seven

Develop and implement processes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that the number of recorded hate crimes has increased across all protected characteristics in Wales, with evidence to suggest a spike in race and religion hate crimes following trigger events. (Justice and personal security)

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that there has been a sharp increase in the number of sexual and domestic violence offences reported to and recorded by the police since 2015. (Justice and personal security)

Expected outcomes

Processes in place to tackle hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Improved awareness amongst people in the community of the advice and support available to them.

Actions

1. Work with partners to deliver preventative measures and provide advice and support to people who experience abuse, harassment, hate crime or bullying, including women from ethnic minorities, disabled women, women with complex needs, men, young people and children.

How we will know how we are doing

Information and data on preventative processes, including outcomes for protected groups.

Information and data on relevant advice and support provided to people experiencing abuse, harassment, hate crime or bullying, focusing on groups identified as in most need.

Information and data on number of people accessing advice and support.

Information and data on progress with Regional Strategy for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence 2018 - 2023.

Strategic Equality Objective Eight

Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that disabled people face a shortage of accessible and adaptable homes and long delays in making existing homes accessible. (Living standards)

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that rough sleeping in Wales has increased and there are high levels of homelessness. (Living standards)

A report commissioned by Ending Youth Homelessness Cymru was published in August 2019 - 'Out on the Streets. LGBTQ+ & Youth Homelessness in Wales'. This report identifies that the LGBTQ+ community is disproportionately affected by youth homelessness and young people are more likely to be made homeless as a result of family breakdown than their non-LGBT peers.

Expected outcomes

More adapted and accessible affordable housing properties available that are suitable for disabled and/or elderly people.

Existing homes made accessible in a reasonable time scale where adaptations are needed.

Improvement in percentage of homeless cases prevented.

Actions

1. Consider evidence and feedback on barriers to accommodation and take action as appropriate.
2. Develop and implement an Older Persons Housing Strategy to meet the needs of the Vale's ageing population.
3. Implement an action plan to ensure our services are more accessible to the young LGBTQ communities.
4. Provide our staff with specialist training to enable them to provide appropriate service that meets the needs the young LGBTQ communities.

How we will know how we are doing

Additional number of adapted/accessible affordable housing properties delivered each year.

Information and data on preventative programmes, including outcomes for protected groups.

Information and data on number of people accessing advice and support.

Information and data on housing needs by protected characteristic.

Information and data on homelessness in Vale of Glamorgan.

Strategic Equality Objective Nine

Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.

Protected characteristics

This benefits all protected groups and in particular, older and disabled people.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that poor transport and digital infrastructure in rural areas is affecting people's ability to participate in all aspects of life, particularly households without cars, older people in rural areas, and disabled people. (Participation)

Expected outcomes

Improved accessibility of local transport.

Actions

1. Engage with people to identify transport access issues.
2. Develop a plan to address transport access issues as appropriate.
3. Provide training to Council staff on how to help meet the needs of disabled passengers.

How we will know how we are doing

Information and data on preventative programmes, including outcomes for protected groups.

Information and data on number of people accessing advice and support.

Information and data on measures taken to improve transport accessibility.

Information and data on service user satisfaction.

Information and data on how Council staff have been trained to have the knowledge and skills to help meet the needs of disabled passengers.

Our fourth Corporate Well-being Objective is **to respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.**

The Strategic Equality Plan seeks to ensure our local environment can be enjoyed by a diverse range of people, including disabled people.

We understand how our environment contributes to individual and community well-being. We are committed to respecting and enhancing our environment to ensure we all have access to our local area, know about it, and can enjoy it.

Strategic Equality Objective Ten

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

Protected characteristics

This will benefit all protected groups, particularly disabled people for whom there are more barriers.

Expected outcomes

Residents and visitors will be able to access information on the natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including how accessible these are and what facilities are available so they can plan their visits.

Actions

1. Consider the needs of people with protected characteristics when working with community groups and other partners to provide and sustain local facilities.
2. Promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage so that where possible, they are accessible and known to all protected groups.

How we will know how we are doing

Information and data on promotion strategies.

Information and data on community groups and other partners we have engaged with to promote environment and heritage.

Information and data on toilets and Changing Places.

Monitoring Progress & Publishing Results

The Council will continue to check on progress towards meeting our equality objectives and report on this each year to the Council's corporate management team, Equality Consultative Forum, and Cabinet in the annual equality monitoring report. This is published on the Council's website and includes an assessment of the effectiveness of the steps we are taking to meet the equality objectives.

We will be complemented by other equality and employment information each year that is published annually.

The Council is aware that the Welsh Government has been consulting on the commencement of the socio-economic duty as part of the Equality Act 2010. We will review our strategic equality objectives and actions when it becomes clearer what the duty will require the Council to do. The legislation is due to come into force in April 2020. In the meantime, we have included actions that will help us to think about the impact of our work on people who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

For More Information

Visit our website

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

News and Updates – directly to your inbox

You can subscribe to Vale Connect and keep up to date with news, events and other updates, including weekly waste and recycling collection reminders. Sign up on the Vale of Glamorgan Council website.

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Keep up to date with all the latest news, events and information from the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Follow @VOGCouncil on Twitter or like Vale of Glamorgan Council on Facebook.

If you have a query about Council services, please contact us:

- Email c1v@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk;
- or call 01446 700111

Equality Impact Assessment

Please click on headings to find [general guidance](#) or section guidance with an example. You will find supporting information in appendices at the end of the guidance.

When you start to assess your proposal, arrange to meet Tim Greaves, Equality Co-ordinator, for specific guidance. Send the completed form to him for a final check and so that he can publish it on our Vale of Glamorgan equality web pages.

Please also contact Tim Greaves if you need this equality impact assessment form in a different format.

1. [What are you assessing?](#)

The Council's draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 24

2. [Who is responsible?](#)

Name	Tom Bowring	Job Title	Head of Policy and Business Transformation
Team	Policy and Business Transformation	Directorate	Managing Director and Resources

3. [When is the assessment being carried out?](#)

Date of start of assessment	May 2019
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4. [Describe the proposal?](#)

What is the purpose of the proposal?

A new Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 will set out new equality objectives for the Council. It will detail how we will meet those objectives and show how the Council will work together with its partners for a fairer future.

Equality Impact Assessment

Why do you need to put it in place?

The current Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020 and equality objectives were effective from April 2016. Under the specific equality duties for Wales, we must review them no less frequently than every four years.

Do we need to commit significant resources to it (such as money or staff time)

The Plan sets out the Council's equality priorities and high-level supporting actions. The development of the Plan requires engagement across the Council and with external stakeholders.

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan reflects the Council's priorities for the next four years. This informs the way we allocate resources and takes into account the availability of resources to deliver it. The outcome of the Council's budget consultation and revenue settlement from the Welsh Government will inform the content and extent of delivery of the Plan in coming years.

What are the intended outcomes of the proposal?

The Plan will provide a clear set of equality priorities for the Council for the period 2020 – 2024. The Plan will provide a framework for how the Council will work with its partners for a fairer future.

Who does the proposal affect?

Note: If the proposal affects lesbian, gay, homosexual, or transgender people, ensure you explicitly include same-sex couples and use gender neutral language.

The plan affects Vale residents and those who visit and work in the Vale. The Plan is a high-level strategic document encompassing all Council services. We will include more detailed actions in Service Plans. Changes to services and policies across Council Directorates will be the subject of more detailed equality impact assessments which will need to explore the potential impact.

Equality Impact Assessment

Will the proposal affect how other organisations work?

We will deliver many of the activities in the Strategic Equality Plan in partnership. We will work closely with other organisations to deliver parts of this plan.

Will the proposal affect how you deliver services?

The Strategic Equality Plan sets out the Council's equality priorities for the next four years which will influence and shape service delivery across the Council.

Will the proposal impact on other policies or practices?

The Strategic Equality Plan sets out the Council's equality priorities for the next four years which will in turn influence policies and practices across the Council.

Can you change the proposal so that it further promotes equality of opportunity and fosters good relations?

The purpose of the Plan is to promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

As part of the engagement and consultation process, we have asked for people's views on what changes were needed to the draft plan.

The draft plan had four equality objectives:

- to work in a way that meets the needs of residents and local communities;
- to support learning and employment for protected groups, focusing on those who are most disadvantaged;
- to support the safety and well-being of people at home and in their community;
- to ensure our local environment can be enjoyed by a diverse range of people.

The feedback we had suggested that these objectives were too vague. It also helped us to identify areas of particular concern. To reflect this, we changed the objectives so that

Equality Impact Assessment

they are more focused and highlight areas of concern for particular groups such as disabled people, younger people, older people, and ethnic minority people:

To work with and for our communities

1. Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.
2. Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually.
3. Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.
4. Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024.
5. Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.

To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth

6. Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to address attainment gaps for children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

To support people at home and in their community

7. Develop and implement processes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
8. Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.

Equality Impact Assessment

9. Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.

To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

10. Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

How will you achieve the proposed changes?

Council Services will deliver the Plan by working together and with the local community and other partners to ensure we deliver services that best meet the diverse needs of the community.

Who will deliver the proposal?

Council Services will deliver the Strategic Equality Plan.

How will you know whether you have achieved the proposal's purpose?

We will monitor the Strategic Equality Plan through the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and the Council's Performance Management arrangements. We will report progress to our Corporate Management Team, our Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet.

5. [What evidence are you using?](#)

Engagement (with internal and external stakeholders)

We attended and hosted engagement meetings in the Vale between May 2019 and January 2020 to help us develop the draft Strategic Equality Plan. This included meetings

Equality Impact Assessment

of our Equalities Consultative Forum, attendance at a Youth Cabinet Meeting, and meetings with local disability groups.

Engagement work started in May 2019 with our Equalities Consultative Forum where key stakeholders representing the interests of protected groups helped us to consider which areas of the 2016 – 2020 Plan were still important and needed to be included in the next plan. This helped us to draft a plan for consultation with four broad equality objectives (as described) above with supporting actions.

We recognised that consultation through an on-line survey and social media campaign may not be accessible to everyone, so we also met with groups through the consultation period. This included the Equalities Consultative Forum, the Vale Youth Cabinet, New Horizons, and Vale People First.

- External Stakeholder Event (Barry Civic Offices)

The feedback and information gathered across our engagement activities has been reflected in the final version of the Corporate Plan 2020-2025.

Consultation (with internal and external stakeholders)

We used an online survey to consult people about these equality objectives between December 2019 and January 2020. We promoted this on the Council's website and through our social media channels.

During this consultation period, we sent the Plan to a number of stakeholders for their comment and to send to their stakeholders. These can be seen in the Engagement and Consultation Feedback Report in Appendix C.

Within the Council, we promoted the on-line survey on our intranet, and consulted with our senior management team, officers responsible for implementing key areas of the plan, trade unions, and elected members.

Equality Impact Assessment

National data and research

The key piece of national research that we have used is the Equality and Human Rights Commission's report 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018'. This report brings together evidence to assess levels of inequality in Wales and what progress has been made to improve outcomes for protected groups since the Commission's last report in 2015.

The report looks at outcomes for people for education, health, living standards, justice and security, work, and participation in politics and public life. It makes recommendations for action, including for the public sector. We have taken these into account in developing our equality objectives.

Local data and research

The Strategic Equality Plan includes data from the Census, population estimates and population projections for the Vale of Glamorgan. This has helped us to identify, for example, that we have an ageing population and that the number of young people we employ is not representative of the local population. This, in turn, is reflected in the focus of relevant equality objectives.

Working in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board an [online Evidence Base](#) has been developed which enables the review of demographic, economic, social and environmental data sets specific to the Vale of Glamorgan. Key indicator sets are monitored through the Evidence Base to enable the appropriate response to data trends.

The majority of data relevant to protected characteristics is drawn from the national Census, as such the most up-to-date data that has informed the development of this Plan is from the 2011 Census. A new national Census will be undertaken in 2021. It will be necessary to review new data relevant to protected characteristics when this information becomes available. This information will inform the implementation of this Plan as appropriate.

Equality Impact Assessment

6. How robust is the evidence?

Does it show what the impact will be (positive and negative)?

The aim of the Council's work is to have a positive impact on residents, visitors and workers in the Vale of Glamorgan. The Strategic Equality Plan sets out the priorities of the Council in working towards more positive outcomes for people with protected characteristics and / or who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

For each of the equality objectives, the Plan outlines the positive outcomes expected from achieving the equality objectives.

The equality objectives align with the Council's well-being objectives to be achieved over the next five years:

- Objective One: To work with and for our communities
- Objective Two: To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- Objective Three: To support people at home and in their community
- Objective Four: To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

The Council is confident that, in working in a more integrated approach towards these 4 objectives and its ten equality objectives, it can influence a wide range of activities and services across the Vale. The Council will be working towards making a positive difference to the well-being of residents and visitors. Working to achieve the equality objectives will also help maximise our contribution to delivering the national well-being goals.

What are the gaps?

The Strategic Equality Plan contains 35 high level actions that outline how we will work to achieve the ten equality objectives. More detail on how the 35 actions will be achieved will be contained in an Annual Delivery Plan which will be published each Spring. The Annual Development Plan actions will be translated into actions detailed in Service and Team

Equality Impact Assessment

plans across the Council. The performance against actions in Service Plans are monitored, reported and scrutinised on a quarterly basis.

What will you do about this?

We will meet with officers in relevant services to identify gaps in data or information and to agree what needs to be done to deliver the supporting actions for each equality objective. Each year, we will gather information on progress in our Annual Equality Monitoring Report.

We will also use the Annual Delivery Plan to outline the specific work that Council Services will be doing for each year of the four year Strategic Equality Plan to achieve the high level actions and objectives. The Annual Delivery Plan is an annual document so areas of focus will be identified in part through the Service Planning process with Directors, Heads of Service and Operational Managers.

What monitoring data will you collect?

The monitoring data we collect varies for each Council Service. Examples of this can be found in our [Annual Equality Monitoring Reports](#). These reports include a detailed employment report with information about the recruitment, pay and employment of our staff analysed by protected characteristics.

Progress against the Annual Delivery Plan will be reported each year, including data on progress towards the equality objectives.

How often will you analyse and report on this?

We will analyse data annually for the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and the Annual Delivery Plan. We will publish this information on our website.

During the year, each Council Service will have its own timetable for analysing the information it collects.

Equality Impact Assessment

Where will you publish monitoring data and reports?

We publish our reports on the Council's website.

We will also discuss progress with our Equalities Consultative Forum.

7. Impact

Is there an impact?

The purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan is to 'work together for a fairer future' and to have a positive impact on protected groups within the Council and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Plan covers all Council Services and aims to improve outcomes for protected groups and to some extent, people who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

The Welsh Government is proposing the commencement of the socio-economic duty in April 2020 and will be providing guidance to support the public sector to implement this duty. As we become clearer about the expectations for implementing the duty, we may need to revisit the Plan to reflect these.

If there is no impact, what is the justification for thinking this? Provide evidence.

If there is likely to be an impact, what is it?

Age –The Plan aims to have a positive impact on people of different ages, for example, through:

- improving employment opportunities for young people;
- reducing attainment gaps for young people;
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions;

Equality Impact Assessment

- reducing exclusion rates for children and young people;
- supporting young people to prepare for employment;
- providing more accessible housing services for young LGBT people;
- meeting the housing needs of older people;
- looking at barriers to accommodation for older people;
- addressing issues relating to transport accessibility.

Disability – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on people with disabilities, for example, through:

- improving engagement and communication with disabled groups;
- improving employment opportunities;
- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council;
- reducing attainment and exclusion rates for children with Additional Learning Needs and disabilities;
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions;
- addressing issues relating to transport accessibility.

Gender reassignment, including gender identity – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on gender identity, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council;
- continuing our work to make progress against the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index;
- developing more accessible housing services for young LGBT people;
- improving engagement and communication with all protected groups;
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions.

Marriage and civil partnership (discrimination only) – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on marriage and civil partnership, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council.

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Pregnancy and Maternity – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on pregnancy and maternity, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council;
- progressing the recommendations in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace: Recommendations for change'.

Race – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on race, for example, through:

- progressing actions to address an ethnic minority pay gap (if we identify there is one);
- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions;
- reducing exclusion rates for children and young people from ethnic minorities;
- developing processes to address hate crime.

Religion and belief – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on religion and belief, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions;
- developing processes to address hate crime.

Sex – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on sex, for example, through:

- continuing to address the gender pay gap;
- progressing the recommendations in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace: Recommendations for change'.

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- Promoting employment opportunities in a way that challenges gender stereotypes;
- developing processes to address hate crime, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Sexual orientation - The Plan aims to have a positive impact on sexual orientation, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council;
- continuing our work to make progress against the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index;
- developing more accessible housing services for young LGBT people;
- improving engagement and communication with all protected groups;
- developing effective anti-bullying solutions;
- developing processes to address hate crime, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Welsh language – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on the Welsh language, for example, through:

- developing a more inclusive work environment within the Council;
- promoting the cultural heritage of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Human rights – The Plan aims to have a positive impact on human rights by considering the needs of protected groups and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged and seeking to better meet these through achieving its equality objectives.

How do you know?

Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.

Equality Impact Assessment

As stated earlier in this document, we have developed our equality objectives using national and local evidence to identify pressing areas of inequality. We have explained above how we think there will be a positive benefit to protected groups.

Within the Plan, we have outline expected outcomes and how we will know how we are doing. We will use these to assess our progress together with data and information from the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and the Annual Development Plan.

What can be done to promote a positive impact?

Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.

We believe that achieving the work outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives will result in better outcomes for protected groups. One of our equality objectives is to improve how we involve, engage and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions. As part of this process, we will be able to promote the work we are doing to achieve our equality objectives and maintain an ongoing dialogue with protected groups to inform our continuing work throughout the lifespan of this Plan.

What can be done to lessen the risk of a negative impact?

Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.

There is no evidence to suggest that there would be negative impacts arising from our work on our equality objectives. However, regular monitoring through gathering information and data, and ongoing engagement should alert us to any issues so that we can address these as they arise.

Is there a need for more favourable treatment to achieve equal outcomes? (Disability only)

We have tried to be inclusive in the way that we have developed the Strategic Equality Plan and the Plan is intended to have positive outcomes for all protected groups as

Equality Impact Assessment

outlined above. However, the evidence we have gathered through research, engagement, and consultation had identified that some issues affect some protected groups more than others. Where this is the case, we have explained this within the Plan and have identified appropriate actions to address this.

Will the impact be positive, negative or neutral?

Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.

In delivering its Strategic Equality Plan, the Council will seek to improve outcomes for protected groups. There should be no negative impact as a result of the implementing this Plan.

As has been set out in the previous sections of this equality impact assessment, the Council has sought to ensure that a diverse range of people has been given the opportunity to feed into, shape and influence the both the draft and final versions of the Strategic Equality Plan and its equality objectives. How the Plan is intended to impact upon these different groups has been outlined in the previous sections.

In implementing the Plan, the Council will seek to continue the conversations that have been started with those who have been involved through engagement and consultation.

8. Monitoring ongoing impact

Date you will monitor progress

We will monitor progress at least every year through the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and Annual Delivery Plan as described above.

Equality Impact Assessment

Measures that you will monitor

We will use the information and data described in the Plan. In addition, each year a suite of local and national performance indicator measures will be identified, agreed and monitored to allow for further analysis on progress made towards key actions in the Plan.

Date you will review implemented proposal and its impact

Work to achieve the equality objectives and actions set out in the Strategic Equality Plan will be ongoing until March 2024. We will monitor progress annually and review the plan no later than in four years.

9. Further action as a result of this equality impact assessment

Possible Outcomes	Say which applies
No major change	No major change applies
Adjust the policy	
Continue the policy	
Stop and remove the policy	

10. Outcomes and Actions

Recommend actions to senior management team

The content of the Strategic Equality Plan will be relevant to all Services across the Council. Staff should be made aware of the new Plan, any actions they will contribute towards, and the responsibility to report on progress at least annually.

Equality Impact Assessment

Outcome following formal consideration of proposal by senior management team

The Strategic Equality Plan will be put into practice. All staff will be made aware of the new Plan, any actions they contribute towards, and the responsibility to report on progress at least annually.

11. Important Note

Where you have identified impacts, you must detail this in your Cabinet report when seeking approval for your proposal.

12. Publication

Where will you publish your approved proposal and equality impact assessment?

The current Equality webpage will be updated on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/equalities/equalities.aspx

In addition to being available online, copies of the Strategic Equality Plan will be available in Council offices and public libraries throughout the Vale.

In addition to anywhere you intend to publish your approved proposal and equality impact assessment, you must send a copy to Tim Greaves, Equality Co-ordinator, to publish on the equality pages of the Vale of Glamorgan website.

13. Authorisation

Approved by (name)	Tom Bowring
Job Title (senior manager)	Head of Policy and Business Transformation
Date of approval	29 January 2020
Date of review	March 2022

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Working Together for a Fairer Future

Vale of Glamorgan Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

Consultation and Engagement Feedback Log

This log gives an overview of the feedback received through the engagement period that started in May 2019 and the 8-week consultation period between December 2019 and January 2020 on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's draft Strategic Equality Plan. This feedback has been received through formal consultation responses, through the Strategic Equality Plan Survey on our website and through discussions throughout the 8 week consultation period.

Where possible, feedback received has been taken into account and reflected in the final draft Strategic Equality Plan.

Who we have engaged and consulted with

To help inform the development of the draft Strategic Equality Plan, we attended and hosted a number of meetings across the Vale of Glamorgan. Consultation and engagement involved different stakeholders, partners and organisations involved in work in the Vale of Glamorgan. The draft Strategic Equality Plan was circulated to networks and partners to provide an opportunity to feed into the development of the Plan.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

What we did and where we have been		
Hosted an online survey	Hosted a social media conversation	Hosted a meeting of the Equalities and Consultative Forum
Engaged with the Active Communities Group of Vale People First	Engaged with New Horizons	Attended Vale Youth Cabinet
Who we've consulted with		
Vale of Glamorgan County Councillors	Vale of Glamorgan Town and Community Councillors	Safer Vale Partnership
Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale	Age Cymru	Alzheimers Society (South East Wales)
Atal y Fro	Cardiff and Vale Parents Federation	Cardiff and Vale Citizens Advice
Diverse Cymru	Glamorgan Voluntary Services	Mind in the Vale
Race Equality First	Show Racism the Red Card	South Wales Police
Stonewall Cymru	Time to Change Wales	Vale People First (Active Communities Group)
Vale 50+ Forum	Wales Assembly of Women	LGBT Café

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Chwarae Teg	Cytun - Interfaith Council	Disability Wales
Llamau	Age Alliance Wales	Trade Unions
GLAM (The Council's LGBT Network)		

Results of On-line Survey

This report was generated on 9 January 2020. 25 respondents completed this questionnaire.

Draft Objective 1

We work with partners to **make sure that our services meet the diverse needs of our residents and local communities**. In doing this, we will think about people who may be disadvantaged due to their protected characteristics. We want to do that for the people living and working here now. We also want to make lasting improvements in equality and fairness for future generations. We will work in a way that provides an open and inclusive environment for our employees which embraces diversity and equality of opportunity. (Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with this objective)

Agree (13)	39%
Strongly Agree (9)	57%
Strongly disagree (1)	4%
Disagree (-)	0%

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the actions listed under this objective.

- **Improve how we involve, engage and communicate with protected groups about our work, decisions and their impact so that we can consider the needs of protected groups now and in the future.**

Agree (10)	48%
Strongly Agree (8)	38%
Disagree (2)	10%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

- **Develop our strong culture of good customer service in line with our values to promote equality of opportunity and respond to the diverse needs of our customers.**

Strongly Agree (10)	48%
Agree (10)	48%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%
Disagree (-)	0%

- **Strengthen equality of opportunity in our employment by embracing our values, increasing diversity, removing barriers, and supporting staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential in an inclusive environment).**

Strongly Agree (11)	55%
Agree (6)	30%
Disagree (2)	10%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

- **Continue to reduce the gender pay gap and improve employment opportunities for protected groups, particularly disabled people.**

Strongly Agree (11) 52%

Agree (6) 29%

Disagree (3) 14%

Strongly disagree (1) 5%

- **Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues and promote the role of councillors to encourage contributions from all sections of the community.**

Strongly Agree (10) 48%

Agree (7) 33%

Disagree (3) 14%

Strongly disagree (1) 5%

Draft Objective 2

We want **residents to have a fair opportunity to become well-educated, skilled, and to achieve their potential** as they develop and learn. We are committed to encouraging people's ambitions and to ensuring that individuals and communities can prosper and achieve their best. (Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with this objective).

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Agree (10)	50%
Strongly Agree (9)	45%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%
Disagree (-)	0%

We will take a number of actions over the next four years to deliver this objective.

Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the actions listed under this objective.

- **Deliver and evaluate programmes and interventions aimed at addressing attainment gaps to make sure they have a positive impact on socio-economic disadvantage, disability, sex, race and other protected characteristics.**

Strongly Agree (10)	48%
Agree (7)	33%
Disagree (3)	14%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

- **Seek to minimise exclusion rates for children with certain protected characteristics, including socio-economic disadvantage, ethnicity and disability.**

Strongly Agree (10)	50%
Agree (6)	30%
Disagree (3)	15%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

- **Analyse bullying data gathered by schools, including racist bullying, to identify trends and review anti-bullying strategies so that there are effective solutions in place.**

Strongly Agree (11) 52%

Agree (7) 33%

Disagree (2) 10%

Strongly disagree (1) 5%

- **Work with partners to support people to prepare for employment**

Strongly Agree (11) 55%

Agree (7) 35%

Disagree (2) 10%

Strongly disagree (-) 0%

Draft Objective 3

We work in partnership to **make sure people are safe at home and in the community and can make choices that support their overall well-being.** We give people the necessary advice, care and support when they need it. (Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with this objective).

Strongly Agree (13) 65%

Agree (6) 30%

Strongly disagree (1) 5%

Disagree (-) 0%

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

We will take a number of actions over the next four years to deliver this objective.

Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the actions listed under this objective:

- **Work with partners to deliver preventative programmes and provide advice and support to people who experience abuse, harassment, hate crime or bullying, including women from ethnic minorities, disabled women, women with complex needs, children and young people, and men.**

Strongly Agree (12)	57%
Agree (7)	33%
Disagree (1)	5%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

- **Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.**

Strongly Agree (12)	57%
Agree (6)	29%
Disagree (2)	10%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

- **Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people)**

Strongly Agree (15)	75%
Agree (4)	20%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%
Disagree (-)	0%

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Draft Objective 4

We understand how our environment contributes to individual and community well-being. **We are committed to respecting and enhancing our environment to ensure we all have access to our local area, know about it, and can enjoy it. (Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with this objective)**

Strongly Agree (12)	57%
Agree (8)	38%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%
Disagree (-)	0%

We will take a number of actions over the next four years to deliver this objective. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the actions listed under this objective:

- **Consider the needs of people with protected characteristics when working with community groups and other partners to provide and sustain local facilities.**

Strongly Agree (10)	48%
Agree (9)	43%
Disagree (1)	5%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%

- **Promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage so that where possible, they are accessible and known to all protected groups**

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strongly Agree (13)	62%
Agree (7)	33%
Strongly disagree (1)	5%
Disagree (-)	0%

Any comments?

This draft strategy is like 'motherhood and apple pie': anyone can agree with the framework, but 'the devil is in the detail'. As the parent of a child with SEN, the commentary in sections on 'ALN' (note that this terminology is not yet even in force in Wales until the reforms are implemented in 2021, which I think causes confusion upfront for families) serves to obscure difficult experiences. A specific commitment to uphold existing legal rights in full and to act reasonably would have been welcome. There appears to be no meaningful and transparent scrutiny by councillors of SEN policy and practice, or any quality review: I think this is crucial and should be standard practice e.g. I note that school budget data has not even been published in recent years (a required practice), let alone SEN budget data. A commitment to providing education, social and school transport services that actually meet the individual needs of children with SEN would also be welcome. I could go on, though instead to summarise, detailed plans to achieve these objectives are required to judge how effective they are likely to be in addressing inequalities experienced by protected groups. I think a good starting place would be for the Authority to undertake to meet existing statutory duties in full.

No one can disagree with your objectives, they are fine words and it is very easy to strongly agree with everything you state. However, I wonder how you identify the disadvantaged who through no fault of their own are in this position and those who could not care less about how they live including their children and make no attempt to help themselves and their family but prefer to live off handouts from the state and

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives May 2019 – January 2020

community. Some of the disadvantaged are self-inflicted. Only perhaps education and counselling could perhaps help but it is a daunting task to turn them around and I wish you success.

Unfortunately, objectives and actions are written in a very vague manner and as a result it may be difficult to judge whether they have been achieved in a meaningful way. How are you going to measure improvements, a word frequently used in the document? Example, if you wish to reduce the pay gender gap what do you intend to reduce it by? In the current wording a reduction of .001% would be an improvement. Are you prepared to really accept that as such a minute amount would not even be statistically significant? While I agree with all you intend to do, you have not set out objectives etc that are clearly measurable or indicate what will be considered an acceptable level of improvement.

Access for All. Publish list of wheelchair / mobility scooter off road routes. Stop placing physical barriers and replace many that stop wheelchair use. Extend the number of accessible routes.

I have disagreed with some of the objectives not because I am against equal opportunities and diversity but because in my opinion the Vale Council is already taking affirmative action and in a climate of austerity it is not appropriate to seek further improvements. Funding is better spent on other things such as ensuring necessary infrastructures are fully effective.

Unsure about exclusion. A severely disruptive child can have an adverse effect on the education of other children in a school unless effective (and expensive) support is put in place. Schools do not have the funding to do this at present.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives May 2019 – January 2020

Promote our natural environment. Does that include closing down pollution creating incinerators and reducing the amount of unneeded traffic our roads. Does it also take into consideration the amount of house building on what could be green sites? The Council needs to take into account that there are only two roads out of Barry, and both these roads are nose to tail single occupant cars from 07:00 until 09:00 Monday to Friday, many of them will spend 8 hours in a car park. The Council needs to encourage the use of public transport to support the current infrastructure and ensure that the public transport providers improve their services, providing regular routes to Cardiff through Cardiff Bay as well as via Ely and Leckwith.

These aims are formulated so generically that it is difficult to imagine anyone disagreeing with them. I hope the agreement won't be taken as license to justify decisions that should form part of a more detailed and careful consultation. For example, I read a few months ago that even though the consultation on transport options between Penarth and Cardiff indicated that it would not be a good idea to put buses on the barrage, I also later read that the VoG council is now re-considering that option. In the news article I read, a local councillor justified this by saying that disabled people need access to the barrage. I completely agree that disabled people need access to the barrage, and completely disagree that a bus across the barrage is the right way to go about that. Many times when I am on the barrage I see families with children, with one parent in a wheelchair or mobility device. Those parents feel comfortable taking their children to the barrage because a) it is accessible to wheelchairs and mobility devices and b) it is car-free. If you are genuine in these aims listed in this consultation, fab, but please don't use them to justify poor decisions.

Strong set of commitments. Much on staff here: would like to see more on how elected reps are going to be supported in understanding and articulating these

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

values, also on how the council will create pathways for those in VoG to challenge action or inaction that fails to protect those with relevant characteristics. Need to make sure these exist and are effective. But pleased that this is an issue my council appears to be taking seriously.

Respite services in Western Vale-known problem area-on going for many years. The need is there! Where is the local community service?

I have worked in the Council for almost ten years and can honestly say, I've never witnessed any bullying or harrassment on grounds of race, religion, sex or disability, although I'm sure it probably does exist in some areas, due to the size of the authority. I don't agree with all of the comments in the survey, as I don't see the need to specifically work with groups I don't see are being discriminated against. I do feel at times disadvantaged / protected groups can use this 'status' to their advantage. I know of individuals that have, within this authority. This may not be a popular view but it is mine. As for employment, surely the best candidate for the role should be appointed, regardless of above status. This also goes for any housing needs, why should there be any bias towards any particular group, whether white and straight / gay / bi or any BAME person? I genuinely have never seen it but if it is happening and is evidenced, then deal with it appropriately through our disciplinary process and get rid of the people involved.

More effort in promoting integrated transport. Forget major new roads and token cycle lanes that go nowhere, instead fix existing roads and provide suitable cycle networks that link with accessible public transport for all.

Your diversity groups are not inclusive

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

All agreed in an ideal world. But at what cost?

Not keen on the abuse and bullying section where men was just tacked on the end like an after thought, does not seem very inclusive for something that is suppose to promote equality!

Objectives are to be lauded especially those relating to us older folk

Council Response

The majority of survey respondents have agreed or strongly agreed with the equality objectives.

In response to comments on the vagueness of the equality objectives, we have created a set of more focused objectives and supporting actions.

Concerns were expressed about accessibility for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. We have added reference to accessibility to the equality objective on promoting the Vale's natural and built environment and cultural heritage.

Concerns were expressed about being able fund the work involved in delivering the equality objectives. The Council will be looking for ways to deliver these objectives cost effectively. Some of this work will be about doing things differently and may not require additional expenditure.

Issues were raised about meeting the needs of children with special educational needs or additional learning needs as well as the need for balance between minimising exclusion rates and protecting children from the effects of disruptive

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

behaviour. We have developed an equality objective that seeks to address attainment gaps and overcome barriers to learning.

It was felt to be important that we support staff and elected members to live the Council's values and to be able to challenge action or inaction that fails to protect those with relevant characteristics. We have created an equality objective to support and develop elected members on equality issues. We have an objective on inclusivity in the workplace that will help us improve the way in which we include and look after protected groups.

Where transport issues have been raised, we have an equality objective to look at accessibility of transport, broader transport issues will be considered under one of the corporate well-being objectives.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Engagement and Consultation Feedback

Introduction

The following section brings together comments made throughout the engagement and consultation period. These discussions covered how we should take forward the 2016 /2020 objectives and what people thought about the draft four broad equality objectives that we consulted on and which linked closely to the four corporate well-being objectives.

Much feedback indicated that the equality objectives were too broad and it would be difficult to assess progress against them. In response, we have looked at the objectives and the proposed supporting actions and drawn up ten more focused equality objectives. These amended equality objectives still link to the four corporate well-being objectives. The feedback has been grouped as relevant under the ten amended equality objectives.

Objectives and actions

Use disaggregated data to inform and develop SMART equality objectives. They should be specific to the needs of groups in the community of the Vale of Glamorgan and target groups marginalised or missing from service provision.

These objectives are good but provide more information about what they mean in practice.

The equality objectives should align with well-being objectives.

Focus more on prevention.

Actions are too wordy and difficult to understand.

It is off putting that it is not written in plain language.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Define measures of success.

How will the person on the street know about the plan and find out how it is progressing?

The Plan needs to be strong on working in collaboration with other organisations.

General comments

Add an objective on inclusion. Think about how we can integrate people from protected groups in a strong cohesive community and celebrate protected characteristics.

Include what we are doing well in our equality objectives.

Integration of Health and Social Services - the process fully respects and accounts for equality. However, in the short term, at the appropriate time (not yet), we may need to make sure that the emerging needs are focused needs.

Council Response

The four broad equality objectives have been amended to become ten focused objectives grouped to support the corporate well-being objectives.

We will publish the equality objectives and report on progress against them on the Council's website, and promote this through social media, our Equalities Consultative Forum, and meeting with groups representing the interests of people with protected characteristics.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Equality Objective 1

Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

Engaging with and involving protected groups

It is important to engage and not just consult with representatives of protected groups.

Explain how people's views will shape change and how they can help to drive positive change. It needs to be made explicit that the views of those concerned will feed into decision-making and change. "Nothing about us without us".

Some groups, such as people with learning disabilities, feel their voices are not heard.

Engage at an early stage, listen to people's views, and don't send out fully developed proposals. This approach is more likely to avoid later objections.

Enable effective engagement, particularly on issues such as the Corporate Plan and the Council's budget.

Think about which groups we need to consult on which policies.

There are disability groups who would like to be involved with the lower level actions.

People can be isolated when they are or become disabled. They eventually learn from each other but Social Services need to be involved at an earlier stage.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Women and men experience and interact with services differently, and these experiences vary even more for other marginalised groups.

Work with the community and organisations that support protected groups to ensure we hear their voices in decision making.

Put in place targets to achieve improved representation and say how we will monitor progress.

Update groups regularly through meetings and emails – ‘not about us but with us’. Professionals at the Council need to engage more often with protected groups.

Use surveys and Survey Monkey for short surveys – 5 minute maximum with plenty of space for open comments. Do this maybe three or four times a year.

An example of using a ballot box was used (used by Vale Youth Forum). People are asked for their opinion and the results are communicated to people.

The Council needs a totally accessible website that is a gateway to people getting the information they need.

When we carry out consultation and surveys, we need to give people feedback. It needs to be a two way system, not just the Council telling people what it is doing.

Local disability groups would appreciate progress reports every six months.

Social Worker entitlement

When someone becomes disabled and leaves hospital, there is no information available on how things work, what you can claim, what you can do. For example, nobody explains that you are entitled to a Social Worker. It would be helpful if the New Horizons film could be included in the information provided in hospitals.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

There is no information on what support is available, for example, Occupational Health. The Social Worker refers you to Occupational Health but you may not know that you can have a Social Worker.

Social Worker Allocation

There is an issue with the way that Social Workers are allocated. People don't get a Social Worker they can keep. They are just allocated for one project. Each request is treated as new so there is a new Social Worker allocation.

It feels like you have to rejoin the service each time you want something. It would be nice to have a check on how you are getting on at least once a year.

There are lots of people who can't access a computer so there needs to be other ways of accessing services.

The Council needs to find a way of making sure that people know about Social Services after a diagnosis.

We need to provide Council information in the hospital environment. There ought to be at least a telephone number in a pack of information.

Council workers and their contractors must have more respect for the person involved, not just go into their houses and tell them what they can and can't have. There needs to be better communication between departments.

Data collection and analysis

Collect relevant data for all protected characteristics, explaining why we collect data and what the benefits are as well as how it will be monitored and reported on.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Use information to remove barriers to services and employment.

Use this information to focus on improvement in outcomes for people with protected characteristics in service delivery and employment opportunities.

Communicating in plain language

It is a top priority that information should always be in plain language and style and available in different formats – proactively, not just on request. This includes as many documents as possible, including the minutes of Council meetings.

Think about which documents need to be accessible and which groups they need to be accessible for. Produce separate documents where information is aimed at children and young people.

To make sure that officers think about accessible documents, perhaps add a section to the equality impact assessment process or have a panel for checking draft public documents.

Follow the four principles of open government – open, transparent, accessible, and participative – applicable to the UK and Welsh governments. The aim of these principles is to get better services.

People need to talk in plain language at meetings so that they are accessible to as many people as possible.

Provide alternatives to digital information, particularly for those living in rural areas where there may not be internet access.

It is important to produce Easy Read documents.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Council Response

In seeking to improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions, we will take this feedback into consideration. In doing this, we will look at how we can improve data collection as well as making our communication plain and clear to understand and accessible to a wide range of people.

We will provide the service specific information to the relevant service, in this case, Social Services, for consideration in how services are developed.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Two

Continue to reduce the gender pay gap in the Council, identify whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities in the Council by March 2021, and report on both annually.

Gender pay gap

Make clear whether the objective is about the gender pay gap for staff in the Council, or the local authority area. Set out how we intend to achieve our stated aim.

If the objective is about the local authority area, think about how we will achieve this, for example, by working with local employers and agencies to reduce the gender pay gap.

Include in the objective something about removing barriers to reduce pay gaps.

Cover other protected characteristics, particularly ethnicity and disability. Put in place actions to address these gaps.

The Council's gender pay gap has halved since 2012 (over 10% then to just under 5% now). Start measuring and reporting on the pay gap for the young, older people, redundant workers, single parents, disabled people, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are reluctant to come out in a new job. They want to please everyone and don't want an adverse reaction. Within the Council, role models, allies, and well communicated policies can help with this.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives May 2019 – January 2020

Involve staff by asking them why they think there is a pay gap to identify possible internal issues.

Ask staff what the barriers are to declaring their protected characteristics to improve declaration rates and data on pay gaps.

Implement modern and flexible working practices, sign up to Chwarae Teg's Fair Play Employer service, or implement training for senior staff, particularly those in recruitment about equality and diversity or unconscious bias.

Consider whether we should start reporting on school staff and be a first adopter of this approach. We could look at how Higher Education has done it, try it out, and pave the way forward.

Think about an interim target for this objective, as we report on the gender pay gap once a year.

Work with other local authorities and engage with the Data Unit to identify best practice.

This information should feed into progress towards achieving gender equality.

Council Response

This equality objective will focus on pay gaps within the Council. Having made significant progress to reduce the gender pay gap, we will continue with this work and begin working on identifying whether there is a pay gap for ethnic minorities. We will develop appropriate actions to address issues relating to such pay gaps in our People Strategy, the Council's plan for managing the recruitment, employment, development, progression, reward, and wellbeing of people.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Three

Improve employment opportunities in the Council for protected groups, particularly disabled and young people, to more closely reflect the diversity of the local population by March 2024.

Employment

If the objective is about the local authority area, think about how we will achieve this, for example, by working with local employers and agencies to improve employment opportunities.

Look at increasing employment across the protected groups.

It's not just about the pay gap but about access to jobs and work experience. People with learning disabilities may need support for both.

New Horizons would like a link between the Council and its day centre for job applications.

In terms of the Council removing barriers, disabled people need a bridge between not having a job and working. Part-time work would be alright, ideally 15 – 16 hours per week so that they can keep the safety net of benefits in case the job doesn't work out. It is important to look after people's financial position. They need more information on jobs and work experience.

People worry that when they take a job, they will lose their benefits. It would be useful if disabled people could have a six month trial and less than 16 hours work.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

There needs to be improved accessibility to work. People with disabilities need more jobs where they can work from home. This would help deal with the safety aspects of working.

Support protected groups to remain longer within employment. It's not just gaining employment which poses a challenge but staying in it longer-term and feeling supported and valued.

Think about recruitment processes. Is a formal interview the right format? How can we tackle unconscious bias of recruitment panels?

Keep the existing focus on providing work experience and apprenticeships.

Give more opportunities to young people through structured and varied opportunities. Expand opportunities to include craftwork and social work, rather than just administrative work, but in a more structured way.

Encourage young people to think of the Council as a future employer.

Continue working with colleges and supporting Foundation Modern Apprenticeships.

Promote opportunities to Careers Advisors in schools and find other new ways to promote them. For example, in April, there was a Careers Fair which 60 young people attended. They met representatives from 15 different departments. Do this annually.

The Youth Service wants a permanent work experience role.

Facilitate work experience elsewhere. We used to do this through 'Career Opportunities'.

We need to think about the needs of Children Looked After (CLA).

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives May 2019 – January 2020

We do a lot for high / low level learners but not as much for learners in the middle.

Be careful that we assess what young people are capable of on an individual basis and do not push them to the point where they are stressed because we are asking them to do things that are beyond their capability.

Find out what their anxieties are about the work experience and look after their welfare.

Staff need advice and training on how to support a work experience placement effectively.

It may work better to provide work experience for 1 day a week for 15 weeks than 1 – 2 weeks condensed experience. This may also be easier for staff to support.

Develop a high-level programme – think through the role, what it is made up of, break it down, talk it through, give it a go, take time out to think about the role and then tailor it to the individual.

Teach people the basics of how to do the basic things right.

Council Response

We have clarified that this objective is about improving employment opportunities at the Council.

Our aim is to improve employment opportunities for protected groups and to address any barriers that might prevent some protected groups from accessing these. This will include thinking about opportunities for young people and disabled people. The suggestions as to how to approach developing opportunities will be taken into account when developing these opportunities.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Four

Continue to work on developing a more inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential through implementing a range of actions by March 2024.

Improved understanding of equality issues and the needs of protected groups

Develop this into a wider inclusivity objective with education as part of it and extend to community education, perhaps through the Community Cohesion Officer and through schools, youth services, and community groups.

Educate people about rights-based values, respect, understanding, and awareness in combination with tackling these issues in the school setting.

Educate people about learning disabilities and explain how people with learning disabilities need more time and understanding.

Publish articles we produce for StaffNet for things like Black History Month or IDAHOBIT on our external website.

Our appraisal process needs to check staff's awareness of the issues and provide opportunities for development.

The equality and diversity suite of training should include unconscious bias training.

Awareness raising needs to include how to be conscious of existing inequality, how actions might exacerbate inequality, and empower people to work to tackle inequality.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Target training at those who deal with members of the community.

Use resources such as the New Horizons film to raise awareness and publicise it widely so staff and residents benefit from the information.

Use LGBT role models and allies to raise awareness within the Council.

Management needs to regularly and consistently communicate the importance of working to achieve equality.

Make clear to staff the consequences of bullying, hate incidents and crimes by using disciplinary and grievance procedures. People need to have confidence that we will use these procedures to tackle these issues.

Every year, report on the number of times that we have used our policies to address these types of issues.

Tell staff where they can get support on our Health and Safety and Occupational Health web pages.

Testimonies – could we film some short videos using GLAM members on how things have changed / improved.

There needs to be greater visibility of people issues.

The Corporate Team needs to buy-in, vocalise, and get the message out there.

There should be more gender neutral toilets.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Vale People First is about to start a new project – ‘Changing your thinking’. This involves making 6 short films and pamphlets on a range of mental health, learning difficulty, and learning disability issues.

New Horizons has made a film about the challenges that people face when they become disabled and signposting people to support.

Council Response

We welcome the range of ideas put forward to better educate people about equality issues and how to help people feel included. We will take these into account as we implement this objective.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Five

Provide support and development to elected members on equality issues.

It would be useful to have a description of the role of a councillor on the website.

It is good to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues with elected members, including through refresher training.

Raising Awareness

Vale People First is about to start a new project – ‘Changing your thinking’. This involves making 6 short films and pamphlets on a range of mental health, learning difficulty, and learning disability issues.

New Horizons has made a film about the challenges that people face when they become disabled and signposting people to support.

It is good to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues with elected members, including through refresher training.

Council Response

We welcome the potential to use new resources to support our elected members in better understanding the equality issues that affect our staff and residents.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Six

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to address attainment gaps for children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

Educational attainment gaps

Identity based bullying can be a contributing factor to lower attainment.

Children and young people need more support specific to their needs and access to support groups, friendship groups, and allies.

Provide more support for children with challenges to achieve their GCSEs, including different teaching methods that don't rely on sitting in classrooms to learn (which can be difficult for those with learning disabilities).

Identify which groups need specific interventions and explain how these will be carried out.

Pupils need support especially if they: have a physical or learning disability; have poor mental health; are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender; are looked after children; are Black or of a minority ethnic background.

Police and others can signpost to support groups.

Build the confidence of school staff to tackle issues and share good practice.

Educate people about rights-based values, respect, understanding, and awareness in combination with tackling these issues in the school setting.

Bullying

We need to tackle bullying in schools better. Bullying stops learning.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

We need to encourage witnesses of bullying to report it, not just those who experience it.

Help children and young people to understand learning disabilities more.

Do more disability awareness training, including in schools.

Use videos on bullying and roll this out as training.

Disabled people experience bullying and hate crime. It would be good to have a Council contact for disabled groups to work with on this.

Do more to promote Keep Safe Wales cards, including for school children to use, particularly when they are vulnerable when they are walking home from school.

More needs to be done to tackle the issues of children saying 'you're gay' in the playground. Include reference to homophobic bullying in the actions for Education.

Encourage people with protected characteristics to report hate crimes, harassment, stigma and discrimination and provide support / signposting.

Supporting Learning and employment

The Council needs to communicate and promote what support is available, including links to other organisations that can help.

There is a need to identify individuals who may need support before they have a gap in employment (for example, to develop skills for a future move) as a preventative step.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

There is a potential community leadership role for the Council. For example, supporting a change in employers' mindsets.

There is a need to ensure a link with Additional Learning Needs provision in schools and the quality of this – especially post-16, for example, through apprenticeships.

Sharing information

It would be useful if a yearly update from Ysgol y Deri could be shared with local disabled groups.

Integration is better than separating children with differences.

Accessing qualifications

Remove barriers to completing vocational courses. Example, a student could not continue with a catering course because there was a Level 3 written examination.

Council Response

The feedback shows that people feel that there are many things that can affect attainment, including bullying, including that arising from people's protected characteristics. There are also ideas on how the Council can support the move into employment. We will take these into account as we implement this objective.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Seven

Develop and implement programmes throughout the life of this plan to address hate crimes, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Hate crimes, harassment and discrimination

Hate crime

Talk to protected groups to find out their issues and what the barriers are to them reporting hate crime.

Work closely with organisations supporting and representing protected groups to understand the current barriers and develop solutions.

Develop a matrix for protected characteristics to identify the issues and barriers for each of the protected characteristics.

Work with schools to simplify the complex information around this topic. Simplify the information on hate crime for everyone.

Develop training packages to equip people to deliver information on this topic. Use developed training and intelligence from organisations such as Diverse Cymru, Show Racism the Red Card, and Stonewall.

Raise awareness of what hate crime is before we encourage people to report it.

People get used to hate crime and it is so common that they do not report it.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

We need to encourage witnesses of hate crime to report it, not just those who experience it.

Make sure there are effective processes in place to respond to incidents when people report them.

People need to know what they can expect from the Police or the Council when they report a hate crime. Establish processes to share information across the Police and Council.

Different communities perceive the Police in different ways so the public needs reassurance. This reassurance is key to encouraging more people to report incidents.

Some groups / people have good links with the PCSOs to report hate / mate crime.

Disabled people experience bullying and hate crime. It would be good to have a Council contact for disabled groups to work with on this.

Do more to promote Keep Safe Wales cards.

Could we make a link to Race Equality First's reporting app for hate crime and community outreach services.

Could we link to the Race Equality First reporting app for hate crime and community outreach services.

A broader question was asked about how the Council could identify those needing the support from the Council and how those who may be outside these services could be identified and assisted. It was acknowledged that the ability to do this may be limited, but that promotion / communication and working with others was key.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Domestic abuse

Link this with hate crime in a reworded objective. Reducing domestic violence is part of hate crime and dealing with vulnerable groups.

Provide information that people can easily understand on how to deal with incidents and where they can get support to sort out issues.

Reflect changes in law and link in with the Council's 5 Year plan on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

People working in this area normally refer to survivors rather than victims of domestic abuse in any form to make their materials more sensitive. Bring our language in line with this to maintain consistency.

There was discussion about the Citizen's Advice process for debt advice and whether the potential could be explored for identifying whether domestic abuse is happening as a 'way in' to identifying and supporting individuals.

A question was asked about how the Council could identify those needing the support from the Council and how those who may be outside these services could be identified and assisted. It was acknowledged that the ability to do this may be limited, but that promotion / communication and working with others was key.

In terms of supporting the safety and well-being of people at home and in the community, there is the potential to look at how these commitments translate into our funding process and priorities. For example, is there scope to include reference to the Plan in the Strong Communities Grant Fund application/assessment process?

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

There was discussion about the Citizen's Advice process for debt advice and whether it could potentially be used for identifying whether domestic abuse is happening as a 'way in' to identifying and supporting individuals.

Council Response

It was suggested that we had a broad objective to cover hate crime and domestic abuse. This we have done.

It is clear that there is a need for us to continue to distribute information on the support and advice available for dealing with both hate crime and domestic abuse – the focus of this equality objective.

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May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Eight

Consider the housing needs of people with protected characteristics and how our work impacts on them, taking action to address any disproportionate impacts on these groups.

Housing Needs

Do we have a policy on hostile architecture? This was seen as a negative policy for homeless people and it was felt that there should be positive interventions to support homeless people.

Adaptations

There have been problems with what would appear to be a straightforward adaptations. For example, you may need handrails in your house. A visit to the house by the Social Worker / Occupational Health may confirm that you can have hand rails, then the person installing them arrives and says that they cannot be fitted because the walls are not stable. If they are fitted and a mess of the walls is made, you are then expected to make good the works yourself including redecorating when you do not have the physical or financial means to do this. There needs to be better information, communication and co-ordination.

Another issue is that people are encouraged to have works done that will potentially meet their long term needs. This is not always appropriate. People often want just enough to meet their current needs. Having more than they need can be

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psychologically damaging, making people feel worse than they are. They want the Council to listen to what they want and need.

There must be good links between departments that are providing services. The aim should be to keep people as independent as possible for as long as they can. There always seems to be some reason why work can't be done, whether it is cost or structural.

It would be helpful if there was one person – an agent – to bring everything together to remove the stress from the client.

Some people are given lifts but the client has to take on the lift contract and people can't afford to do this or to maintain or update the equipment. For example, to fix an electrical toilet (on which the client absolutely relies), the call out is £250. Then there may have to be further adaptations. Disabled people often have very limited income and are not able to afford this.

One person had to spend £300 to stay at the Premier Inn whilst problems with adaptations were sorted out. It was the only way they could have access to the facilities on which they relied.

There appears to be hidden costs and a lack of cost-effective solutions.

If people need lifelong adaptations, they need lifelong support to maintain them. These are not luxury items. They are necessities.

There are issues with the Vale of Glamorgan grant system. If the cost is £1 over, you can't have it, for example, a garden rail.

Little things like this mean that clients can't be bothered to jump through the hoops necessary to get the support / adaptations that they need.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

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Council Response

The feedback has provided some very specific examples of how the adaptation system does not always meet the needs of disabled people. We will provide this information to the relevant Council Services so that they can consider how their services can be developed to better meet these needs.

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Strategic Equality Objective Nine

Work in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility, particularly for disabled people and older people.

Transport

There is evidence to show that there is a link between lack of transport and employment opportunities, so, for example, you can't access employment if you are poor, disabled, under 17.

There is no bus to the Enterprise Zone or from rural Care Homes in the evening.

There is a lack of accessible, affordable transport. It can cost people between £30 and £40 a trip.

Greenlinks can't confirm a booking and there is no service at weekends so people can't rely on this.

It is fine to get on a train to Cardiff but you have to go all the way to Barry Island and back again to be able to get off the train on the way back.

You can't take a mobility scooter on the train.

A train won't take more than two wheelchairs at a time and these have to be booked.

It is appreciated that the Council's Transport Manager attends the meetings of a local disability group to discuss transport accessibility.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

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Council Response

The equality objective makes a commitment to working in partnership to consider issues relating to transport accessibility. This includes engaging with people which will allow the issues identified to be explored further.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

May 2019 – January 2020

Strategic Equality Objective Ten

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to promote our natural and built environment and cultural heritage, including accessibility, to protected groups.

Dropped kerbs

There needs to be accessible dropped kerbs.

Cars often park on dropped kerbs.

Accessible communities / environment

People can't access shops and buildings with one step or more, particularly if they are using a heavy wheelchair.

Could we design a logo or system to say what is accessible in the Vale and what the facilities are, for example, toilets (and opening times), changing places, paths, bus route.

Some suggestions were made about how this could be supported in practice. For example, the provision of information and support in fundraising, building business cases, and how to empower groups to be able to get involved in operating services.

There was a question about how this could link in with procurement processes.

Summary of Feedback from Engagement on Equality Objectives

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Accessible toilets

Make visitor destinations accessible to all – for instance, Barry Island is a major resort and yet has no Changing Place (unlike Caswell Bay). It would be great to have one near the Beach Huts.

It would be useful to have an update on Changing Places, including information on the Council's website to say where they are.

Toilets in general are an issue. Having easy access to toilets is a big issue and a human rights issue.

The Vale's libraries are great and used. However, keep the toilets in libraries open. Find a better way of dealing with problems in how people are using the toilets than closing them.

Open the toilets upstairs in the Barry Central Library. It is a problem that they are closed upstairs for people who are using the computers. People have to pack up all their things and go downstairs and outside to use a toilet. This is inconvenient for anyone but particularly challenging for people with disabilities.

The libraries are brilliant places that people like to use but they need toilet facilities.

Accessible toilets need wide enough entrances for bigger wheelchairs to get in.

Toilet doors need to be easy to open and to stay open while someone using a wheelchair or walking aid is getting in and out of the toilet.

It is possible for other people to open the door of a disabled toilet when you are using it. This should not happen.

The disabled toilet in Llantwit Major is disgusting – very dirty and never cleaned.

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If you buy a radar key from the Council, it costs £5 and if you buy it from Ebay, it costs £3. Why the higher cost?

If there is an intention to charge people to use toilets, 10 pence might be manageable. After that, it gets expensive if you need to go to the toilet a lot. It has a disproportionate effect on older and disabled people.

Council Response

Much of the feedback is about improved accessibility – knowing which places in the Vale are accessible and knowing that basic facilities are available such as accessible routes and toilets. We have developed an equality objective that refers to accessibility together with supporting actions to consider these issues in more detail.