

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 11TH MARCH, 2021

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 22ND FEBRUARY, 2021

**“C492 ANNUAL EQUALITY MONITORING REPORT 2019 – 2020 (L/PR)
(SCRUTINY – LEARNING AND CULTURE) –**

The report brought to the attention of Cabinet the Council’s progress against the equality objectives of the Strategic Equality Plan 2016 - 2020 and other actions taken to improve equality for people living and working in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The report summarised what Services had done to collect and analyse equality data on how people with protected characteristics had used their services. It noted what had been done to make improvements in the reporting period 2019 – 2020.

The report provided a commentary on the progress that had been made with each of the equality objectives and where the Council needed to continue to focus its efforts.

Reference was made to appendices which showed the data collected and analysed by Services, a detailed report on employment information, and an employment action plan.

The Leader referred to bullet point 4 of paragraph 2.2 which referred to helping staff know more about equality law, and staff and the public to understand the needs of protected groups. He added that in future this would also include Members of the Authority.

The Leader noted that should there be no comments on the Strategic Equality Plan from Scrutiny, the Plan could then be agreed and placed online on the Council’s website.

The Deputy Leader referred to the amount of work already ongoing regarding Quality Objective 2 which concerned closing attainment gaps amongst children and helping disadvantaged children such as Children Looked After and pupils eligible for free school meals, to reach their full potential, particularly with the added pressures on children as a result of the pandemic.

Councillor King referred to Quality Objective 8 and was pleased to see discussion of the reduction of the gender pay gap and employment opportunities for protected groups but noted that the pandemic would have had an effect on such matters over the last year.

The Leader also highlighted the significant impact that the pandemic would have had on aspects such as hate crime, domestic abuse, harassment and discrimination and the need to do as much as possible to protect vulnerable people.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the content of the report and the Annual Equality Monitoring Report (2019-20) at Appendix A be noted.

(2) T H A T the report and Appendix A be endorsed and referred to the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for consideration, with any comments being referred back to Cabinet to enable publication by 31st March, 2021.

Reasons for decisions

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(2) To ensure Scrutiny Committee consideration of the report and to allow the Council to meet its reporting duty under the specific duties for Wales and continue to make progress towards meeting the public sector equality duty and to ensure its equality work was available for scrutiny by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and others.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Cabinet: 22nd February, 2021

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 22 February 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2019 - 2020
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report (Appendix A).
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Tom Bowring, Head of Policy & Business Transformation
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Corporate Management Team
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive Decision
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>This report brings to the attention of Cabinet our progress against the equality objectives of the Strategic Equality Plan 2016 - 2020 and other actions taken to improve equality for people living and working in the Vale of Glamorgan.</p> <p>The report summarises what Services have done to collect and analyse equality data on how people with protected characteristics have used their services. It notes what they have done to make improvements in the reporting period 2019 - 2020.</p> <p>The report provides a commentary on the progress that has been made with each of the equality objectives and where we need to continue to focus our efforts.</p> <p>Reference is made to appendices which show the data collected and analysed by Services, a detailed report on employment information, and an employment action plan.</p>	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes the content of this report and the Annual Equality Monitoring Report (2019-20) at Appendix A.
2. That Cabinet endorses the report and Appendix A and refers the report to Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for consideration, with any comments being referred back to Cabinet to enable publication by 31 March 2021.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To provide Cabinet with an overview of the progress made in the Annual Equality Monitoring Report (2019-20).
2. To ensure Scrutiny Committee consideration of the report and to allow the Council to meet our reporting duty under the specific duties for Wales and continue to make progress towards meeting the public sector equality duty and to ensure our equality work is available for scrutiny by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and others.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty (the 'general duty') and there are specific duties for Wales.
- 1.2 The specific duties include the requirement to publish an annual report for the previous year by 31 March each year to demonstrate the progress made on equalities issues that are contained within the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and any associated equalities activity.

This report provides Cabinet with the Annual Equality Monitoring Report for the period 2019-2020.

- 1.3 Cabinet will note that the Council now has a new Strategic Equality Plan in place for 2020 - 2024 and as such, this is the final retrospective review of the equalities objectives contained in the previous Strategic Equality Plan.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Annual Equality Monitoring Report for 2019 - 2020 can be found in Appendix A. The report provides information relating to the eight equality objectives contained in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020.
- 2.2 These objectives are:
 - Collect and analyse service data by protected characteristic so services meet the diverse needs of the public
 - Close attainment gaps of children in protected groups

- Make public documents easier for people to read and understand
- Help staff know more about equality law, and staff and the public to understand the needs of protected groups
- Seek the views of protected groups on proposed changes to policy, budgets and services
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to report hate crimes, harassment and discrimination
- Find new ways of reaching victims of domestic abuse and raise awareness of domestic abuse services in the community
- Reduce the gender pay gap and improve employment opportunities for protected groups

2.3 The Annual Equality Monitoring Report is structured so as to meet the requirements of the Equality Act and specific Duties for Wales. The Report therefore includes:

- Background information about the purposes of the Report and the way it has been developed;
- The steps the Council has taken to identify and collect relevant information (and any reasons for not collecting information);
- How the Council has used this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty;
- A statement on the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information;
- Progress towards fulfilling each of the Council's existing equality objectives (setting out what has been done, what has been learnt, where the challenges lie and what still needs to be done);
- A statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the Council has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives;
- The report contains specified employment information, including information on training and pay.

2.4 To demonstrate how other relevant matters (outside of the specific work on the equality objectives) have contributed to this work, the annual report also includes a section on these issues and their contribution to show the wider work underway across the Council.

2.5 The Annual Equality Monitoring report contains a series of appendices to provide further information and make linkages with other relevant reports.

- 2.6** Cabinet is requested to consider and endorse Appendix A and to refer this report for comment by Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee with any views of that Committee being referred back to Cabinet prior to the publication of the Equality Monitoring Report.
- 2.7** Once approved, the Annual Equality Monitoring Report will be translated and published on the Council's website.
- 2.8** Work to progress the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives for the new Strategic Equality Plan for the period 2020 - 2024 is underway and will be reported to Scrutiny and Cabinet in due course.

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

- 3.1** The Strategic Equality Plan and its delivery demonstrates the five ways of working and the pursuit of the Council's well-being objectives.
- 3.2** It is a long-term plan aiming to improve equality for residents over a period of time through the achievement of its equality objectives. We have used research and evidence from the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Is Wales Fairer' which outlines the key challenges for improving equality in Wales.
- 3.3** It aims to prevent identified challenges from getting worse and to put in place measures which can improve fairness and equality for people who live or work in the Vale of Glamorgan. This is underpinned by our responsibilities under the 'general duty' of the Equality Act 2010 and the specific equality duties for Wales.
- 3.4** The equality objectives can only be achieved if there is collaboration across Council Services.
- 3.5** There are equality objectives relevant to most services, such as collecting and analysing data, and engaging with protected groups. Others are specific to a particular service, such as the domestic abuse objective. In turn, some of these will need collaboration with external partners. For example, our Community Safety Team works closely with Atal y Fro - an external organisation providing services for those experiencing domestic violence.
- 3.6** To develop the original Strategic Equality Plan in 2012 and to update it in 2016 and 2020, we involved people through an engagement and consultation process with stakeholders and the public to develop our equality objectives. Each of the equality objectives has an action plan to explain what we aim to do to achieve that objective. There is an equality impact assessment in place which describes the impact of this work on protected groups.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** Officer time is needed to collect, analyse and report on equality and employment information on a regular basis. The benefit is a better understanding of how to target resources to deliver services which best meet the needs of users.
- 4.2** The actions ensure that the Council complies with legislation (avoiding a potential adverse cost implication for non-compliance).

Employment

- 4.3** Officers collect, analyse and report on employment information. The benefit is a better understanding of how to target resources to provide employment opportunities which best meet the needs of staff and applicants.
- 4.4** The Plan contains equality objectives specifically related to employment (regarding the reduction of the gender pay gap) and makes references to the employment profile of the Council as required by the Equality Act.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.5** The Equality Act 2010 created a public sector duty, replacing the race, disability and gender equality duties. The duty came into force in April 2011. The duty covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Under the general duty, public sector organisations must have due regard 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 regard 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 on 8 June 2011. It performs a regulatory role to ensure that listed bodies comply with the duty. If the Equality and Human Rights Commission believes that the Council has not complied with a public sector equality duty, it has the power to seek compliance.
- 4.9** The Annual Equality Monitoring Report sets out how the Council has been working to meet the general duty and public sector equality duty for Wales.

- 4.10** The Council is required to collect, use, and publish equality and employment information to help understand how its policies, practices and decisions affect individuals who share one or more of the protected characteristics. This process is essential if the Council is to comply with the requirements of the public sector specific equality duties in Wales. The information is required to accurately inform the equality impact assessment process, the Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives.
- 4.11** The work reported upon in the Annual Equality Monitoring Report will assist in promoting community cohesion by meeting the diverse needs of local people and improving equality of opportunity.

5. Background Papers

Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance: [Annual reporting, publishing and Ministerial duties: A guide for listed public authorities in Wales](#)

Stonewall's ['What's it got to do with you?'](#) leaflet.

Welsh Government ['2012 - Collecting Equality Data and Harmonised Standards Best Practice'](#) guidance.

[Equality and Human Rights Commission's Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty Wales](#)



**The Vale of Glamorgan Council's
Annual Equality Report
2019 - 2020**

**You can ask for this document in other formats.
For example: larger font; on different colour paper.**

**You can ask for this document in Welsh.
You will find a Welsh version on our website.**

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Introduction

We must report on progress towards meeting our equality objectives and other equality matters every year by 31 March for performance in the previous year. This report tells you about our equality work between April 2019 and March 2020.

We do this to meet our duties under:

- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Public Sector Equality Duty (known as the ‘general duty’); and
- the specific duties for Wales.

We tell you how we have collected and used information to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

We also tell you about:

- how we are getting on with our equality objectives;
- the people we employ; and
- other equality work.

Background

We have described our main equality work in our [Strategic Equality Plan 2016 - 2020](#).

We agreed this plan in March 2016. It is based on our original plan from 2012. There were a number of things we had to do to develop the first plan. We list the main steps below.

- We looked at how much information we had on the people using our services. We especially wanted to know which protected groups were using our services.
- We met with local organisations to see if there were areas that we could work on together.
- We looked at other plans to see if they had actions that needed to be in the Strategic Equality Plan. These plans included the Corporate Plan and the Equality and Diversity Scheme.
- We arranged events for us to meet with other organisations that have an interest in the needs of protected groups. We went to their meetings if they could not come to ours.
- We consulted with the public, staff and trades unions.
- We talked to people about what our priorities should be.

This helped us to decide on our equality objectives. These are an important part of the Strategic Equality Plan.

We consulted people again towards the end of 2015 to help us decide how to update the plan. The main message was to keep working on the areas we are already working on. We have developed these using more recent research such as 'Is Wales Fairer' by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We have also made links with our Corporate Plan.

To make sure we achieve the equality objectives, we put actions in service plans. These plans guide the work of each service area (such as Housing, Visible and Social Services). Each service has to monitor progress with these actions and report on this.

The Leader of the Council leads on equality issues. Directors take the lead in their own service area.

We find out about the latest issues and guidance in a number of ways, including through the Equality and Human Rights Commission network.

Steps taken to identify and collect relevant information

We have been collecting information about who uses our services for some time. We have not always done this in the same way across the Council. Also, we have not always collected data on all protected groups.

For this reason, in 2011, we devised a new form and spoke to managers to explain the importance of using it. We encouraged services to improve how they use this information to help them plan their work to better meet people's needs. We continue to do this.

When we started, we looked at information from key services:

- Libraries;
- Housing;
- Public Protection;
- Housing Benefit; and
- Social Services.

In this year's report, we report on the following services:

- Housing Solutions
- Supporting People
- Housing Benefits and Council Tax Reduction
- Revenue and Benefits
- Shared Regulatory Service
- Children and Young People's Partnership Team

- Communications
- Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing, Learning and Skills
- Standards and Provision, Learning and Skills
- School Access and Organisation
- Library and Information Service
- Adult Community Learning
- Children and Young People Services, Social Services
- Adult Services, Social Services
- Regeneration and Planning – Country Parks, Heritage Coast, Disabled Facilities Grant
- Procurement
- Corporate Complaints - Customer Relations

We normally report on the Registration Service. This service has been unable to report this year due to staffing difficulties and technical issues with its recording systems.

When we look at the information gathered, we consider:

- the data gathered over the last few years;
- the systems used to gather the data; and
- how Services use this information to make improvements.

This helps Managers to identify gaps in the information and take appropriate action.

To clarify why Managers need to collect the information, we use guidance from Stonewall. You can see the guidance in [Appendix 1](#). The form we used to gather information is in [Appendix 2](#).

You can find the equality information that Services have collected in [Appendix 4](#). Each Service says how it has used the information to meet the three aims of the general duty.

The form we use to gather information for this report, encourages Services to show how they have used the information to make improvements to services.

Reasons for not collecting relevant information

Some of the reasons for not collecting information include:

- staff asking users for personal information face-to-face;
- users not wanting to complete another form as well as sometimes long application forms;
- concern that limited surveys do not reflect a true picture;
- not having systems to collect the information.

We encourage managers to explain how important this information is in improving services.

Statement on effectiveness of steps taken to fulfil each of our equality objectives

Here is a short outline of how we developed our original objectives. You can find full details of this in our first [Strategic Equality Plan](#).

- We used national research to help us understand the issues. For example, we looked at 'How Fair is Wales', and 'Not Just Another Statistic' reports. The Equality and Human Rights Commission produced these reports.

- We looked at whether we had any information in the Council to tell us more.
- We talked to groups who know about the interests of protected groups.
- We consulted with our own staff and the public.
- We agreed the equality objectives that we would work on for the next 4 years.

To review our objectives, we looked at more recent research such as 'Is Wales Fairer' by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We also carried out engagement and consultation.

Following this, we agreed our equality objectives. We show what work we have done on these below.

Equality Objective 1:

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

What we have done?

We have increased the number of services collecting and analysing data by protected characteristic. For this reporting year, we have data and information on seventeen different service areas, a significant improvement on our starting point of five service areas.

What we have learnt?

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.

What are the challenges?

There can be a range of issues that affect whether Services collect and analyse data on protected characteristics of its service users.

Sometimes Services don't have the systems to collect information and this can be resource intensive to resolve.

Staff can be reluctant to ask people for this kind of information, even though this information is confidential, particularly where they feel monitoring questions are very personal. They do not always understand how asking such questions can help to: develop services so that they meet diverse needs; and remove barriers to people using their services.

When service users are completing forms to access a service, they can be reluctant to complete an additional form with more information. This again can deter Services from asking for equality information.

What do we need to do?

We need to continue to promote to Services and the public the reasons why we collect this information and how it can be used to their benefit.

We need to help Services to better analyse this information and use it to make improvements for protected groups.

Equality Objective 2:

Close attainment gaps of children in protected groups

What we have done?

We focus on the needs of specific groups which we identify as “vulnerable learners”. This means children and young people who need extra help to learn.

We gather data on these learners to measure the progress they are making in school. We also gather data on attendance and exclusions to check on learners’ wellbeing. We use the data to identify groups and individuals who require further support and to work with school staff to help support them better.

Due to Covid, the Welsh Government withdrew the requirement for schools to provide teacher assessment data, so the data within this report is the most recent available.

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.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

To meet the growth in children and young people with additional learning needs, we have undertaken significant work on reshaping provision in line with the new Additional Learning Needs Act and the Regional Action Plan.

For the last three years, all Special Education Needs (SEN) statements have been issued within 26 weeks. This meant that we stayed in the top quartile ranking position in Wales.

We have developed provision to meet the increasing needs of children and young people with social emotional and mental health difficulties. We are implementing an action plan to establish a trauma informed approach to meeting need.

We have presented to Cabinet our plans for additional provision for pupils with complex needs and autism. We are undertaking statutory consultation to gain the views of stakeholders to inform this provision.

We have a range of good outreach provision which supports schools in meeting the needs of pupils in all areas of additional learning needs. This means that most children and young people with additional learning needs make good progress from their baselines. We successfully support schools to develop in-school provision for additional learning needs. Almost all schools inspected since 2017 have achieved good or excellent for care, support and guidance when Estyn has inspected them.

There is undoubtedly a pressure on schools to meet the needs of a growing number of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health issues. There is a need to further develop outreach services and provision in this area to support schools in meeting this need.

Our special school, Ysgol Y Deri, provides an excellent learning experience for pupils with additional learning needs and outcomes are good. Due to the increasing number of children and young people with complex needs, we have expanded this provision. In the future, we will need to create further capacity to meet projected need.

We have a number of high quality, specialist resource bases. We are developing these as a centre of excellence to provide additional outreach support to schools. Almost all pupils attending the resource bases make good or excellent progress from their individual starting points.

Gypsy / Roma traveller pupils

Outcomes for Gypsy Traveller children and young people are variable depending on the individual needs of learners in the cohort at each key stage in a given year. Gypsy

Traveller learners with English as an additional language in the Vale achieve in line with their level of English language acquisition.

Outcomes for Gypsy Traveller learners in the Foundation Phase are good, and in key Stages 2, 3 and 4 are generally very good.

Children Looked After (CLA)

Our continued commitment to improving attainment levels through a coordinated approach with key partners has ensured that over the past few years, no pupils in local authority care have left compulsory education, training or work-based learning without an approved external qualification. This performance ranks us in the top quartile of Welsh local authorities. We work very closely with partner agencies to support Children Looked After.

Additional funding is made available to schools from Welsh Government and plans for the use of this funding are agreed by the local authority and Central South Consortium to ensure that funding is used appropriately.

Outcomes for children we look after compare well with their peers across Wales.

In the Foundation Phase in 2019, outcomes for Children Looked After were good because 57% of a cohort of 14 achieved the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator. This was an improvement from 2018 when 41% achieved this measure.

At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2019, 75% of a cohort of 22 Children Looked After achieved Level 4+. Of the 25% who did not achieve Level 4+, three had a statement of Special Educational Needs and one learner attended a specialist provision for social and emotional needs.

In 2019, outcomes for looked after children at the end of Key Stage 3 were adequate even though the majority achieved Level 5; 68% of the cohort of 22 achieved Level 5+.

We closely monitor Children Looked After at all key stages and collaborate with school, the education psychology service and other education providers to provide needs led packages, particularly in Key Stage 4. At the end of Key Stage 4, 50% (9) of a cohort of

18 achieved Level 1 or above. 33% (6) achieved Level 1. No pupils achieved Level 2. 16.6% (3) achieved Level 2+. 50% (9) did not attain GCSE qualifications.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM)

Whilst there has been positive progress, we recognise the need to ensure our work with schools continues to deliver required improvements. We want to make sure that the attainment levels of pupils entitled to free school meals match those of their peers.

Our officers continue to work closely with the Central South Consortium's education service. The Consortium works closely with schools to identify best practice to improve outcomes for children and young people eligible for free school meals. Additional funding is made available to school to target this group of vulnerable learners and we share best practice with schools to ensure that funding is used effectively.

At the expected level (outcome 5) at Foundation Phase, there has been an increase in the performance of pupils eligible for free school meals with over 85% of pupils eligible for free school meals made at least the expected level of progress from Reception to the end of year 2 across all areas of learning. Over half of pupils eligible for free school meals made higher than expected progress.

At Key Stage 2, over 75% of pupils eligible for free school meals made at least the expected level of progress across the key stage. Progress in English and mathematics was stronger than in Welsh first language.

At Key Stage 3, over 40% of pupils eligible for free school meals made at least two levels of progress across the key stage.

At Key Stage 4, outcomes across all the five new interim performance measures were above the national average.

Pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well due to the targeted support they achieve from our officers who work closely with schools on a needs-led basis.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2019, most learners with English as an additional language achieved the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator (FPOI) and they performed better than their peers across the Central South Consortium.

When comparing data from 2018 to 2019, there was a slight increase in the number of learners with English as an additional language in categories A - D and an improvement in performance, with 87.5% of a cohort of 71 achieving the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator.

Outcomes for learners with English as an additional language in Key Stage 2 were good. In 2019, most learners with English as an additional language achieved the core subject indicator (CSI) and performed significantly better than their peers across Wales.

Performance at expected level was also strong with a majority of learners with English as an additional language achieving Level 5+ in each of the core subjects.

Outcomes for learners with English as an additional language in Key Stage 3 are good with most learners achieving the core subject indicator. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, nearly all learners with English as an additional language in Key Stage 3 achieved core subject indicator.

The Key Stage 4 outcomes for pupils with English as an additional language (A, B, C, D, E) in 2018 / 2019 are as follows:

- All pupils with English as an additional language achieved Level 1. Vale learners with English as an additional language achieving Level 1 performed better than their peers across Wales.

- 83.5% pupils with English as an additional language achieved Level 2. Vale learners with English as an additional language achieving Level 2 performed better than their peers across Wales.
- 71.2% achieved Level 2+ (including English literature) and 65.7% achieved Level 2+ (excluding English Literature). This difference is explained because some of the learners were not entered for English literature, but all were entered for English language.

Exclusions

Even though the gap has reduced slightly, more boys than girls were excluded during 2018 / 19. Boys are approximately 4 times more likely to be excluded than girls.

The percentage of vulnerable pupils excluded from Vale mainstream schools has increased slightly over the last 2 years.

In 2018 / 19, the exclusion rate per 1000 for pupils with English as an additional language (including fluent) and also ethnic minority pupils remained lower than that of those with English as their first language or White British pupils.

The number of children looked after who were excluded in 2018 / 19 remained the same as in 2017 / 18, compared to an increase of more than 10% in exclusions of children not looked after.

Pupils eligible for free school meals continue to be more likely to be excluded than pupils not eligible for free school meals.

Attendance

Closing the gap between vulnerable learners (pupils eligible for free school meals, Children Looked After, with English as an additional language or with additional learning needs) remains a priority for all schools. Despite regular challenge and support to

schools, overall pupil attendance has declined slightly at both primary and secondary schools.

In primary schools in 2018 / 19, attendance remained the same as in 2017 / 18 and there was little difference between the attendance of boys and girls. The attendance of children looked after increased by 1.2% in 2018 / 19 and is higher than children not looked after. However, the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals fell slightly and is now - 3.8% lower than pupils not eligible for free school meals although higher than the all Wales average.

In secondary schools, attendance remained largely in line with 2017 / 18, although the attendance of boys improved very slightly in 2018 / 19 and is now 0.1% higher than girls. While the attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals increased by 0.7%, it remains - 0.49% lower than that of pupils not eligible for free school meals although higher than the Wales average. The attendance of children looked after remains higher than children not looked after by the local authority.

What we have learnt?

We use data so that the Vulnerable Groups Team can support learners effectively.

Generally, performance outcomes have been good and compare well with peers across Wales.

What are the challenges?

Attainment levels need to be regularly monitored and appropriate action planned to support improvements.

What do we need to do?

Where gaps still exist, such as for pupils eligible for free school meals, it remains a priority to narrow the gap.

Equality Objective 3:

Make public documents easier for people to read and understand

What we have done?

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.

What we have learnt?

There are Services which use Easy Read documents, as well as writing in plain language. These services include Social Services, Disability Sport, Shared Regulatory Services, Housing Benefits and Council Tax Reduction, Revenue and Benefits. Where Services have identified a particular need, they are more likely to think about how they communicate with service users.

What are the challenges?

It requires more thought to write in plain language and is a skill which people need to develop. When staff are under other work pressures, it can be difficult to find the time to develop these skills and to write more plainly.

What do we need to do?

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

What we have done?

We continue to offer equality awareness training. This includes general awareness raising, 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 covering topics such as equality awareness, equality impact assessments, and transgender awareness.

We use events such as Black History Month, LGBT History Month, and World Mental Health Day to raise awareness of issues within the workforce. We do this by putting articles about these events on our intranet, explaining what they are about and the part that staff can play in making a positive difference.

We have set up a network for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans staff and allies called GLAM. GLAM regularly marks occasions such as: LGBT History Month; IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia); Bi Visibility Day; and Transgender Day of Visibility.

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

What we have learnt?

Training helps our staff to understand the issues that people with protected characteristics face. Staff have been positive about the training. It helps them understand how to provide services that meet the individual needs of service users.

What are the challenges?

It can be difficult for staff to take time away from their jobs to attend training or events and to complete e-learning modules. This is particularly the case for front-line workers.

What do we need to do?

We have reduced the length of training courses to two hours rather than day long. This helps managers to release staff for training.

Some staff can now access e-learning modules from their own devices where they do not have access to a computer in work. We need to make this available to more staff.

We need to make the e-learning modules mandatory to staff who have access to them to make sure that more staff have had equality training.

We need to ensure our induction process to ensure that staff have knowledge of equality issues from the start of their employment.

Equality Objective 5:

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

What we have done?

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. Engagement with protected groups is an important part of this process.

Our Communications Team provides advice on engagement to Services. It 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.

We carry out extensive engagement and consultation on important plans and policies such as the Corporate Plan, the Budget and the Strategic Equality Plan.

We have an Equalities Consultative Forum comprising a range of organisations representing the interests of protected groups. It meets twice a year and provides an opportunity for an exchange of information on equality issues.

What we have learnt?

When we engage with protected groups, they give us lots of information on what they want from our services and how they could be improved to better meet their needs. We are able to use this information to inform our plans and policies.

What are the challenges?

It can be challenging finding groups to engage with that represent the interests of all protected groups.

Engagement is time consuming and it can be difficult to find the time and staff resources to engage with a range of protected groups. There is also pressure on a relatively small number of groups to respond to requests to engage and consult.

What do we need to do?

We will continue to keep under review local organisations that are able to engage with us on proposed changes to policy, budgets and services.

We will promote to Services the importance of talking to service users at an early stage of their proposals to ensure that we consider their views and service changes take account of this information.

With an ongoing global pandemic, it has been difficult to engage with groups in the same way that we would have in the past. In previous years, we would have attended meetings to speak to groups about their needs or the impact of a service or policy on them. However, that has not been possible since March 2020. Since then, our engagement work has predominantly relied on digital methods such as Zoom or Teams meetings, online feedback forms and social media platforms to promote our work. This may have had a negative impact on some protected groups, such as older people or people with limited access to digital platforms.

We will be updating our Public Engagement Framework this year and although there will be a lot of focus on digital methods of engagement, we will have due regard to the needs of protected groups and encourage anyone undertaking consultation or engagement projects to find alternative ways of engaging with certain groups.

Equality Objective 6:

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

What we have done?

The Council is in the process of revamping the Community Cohesion Group with members of the community, Community Safety Team, Police and other partner agencies. It will look at community issues, community tensions, hate crime statistics and crime and disorder statistics.

There is a tension monitoring process in place within the Vale coordinated by the Community Cohesion Officer. Every week, a form is sent to community members, agencies and organisations to tell us about any tensions in the community that could become worse or cause crime and disorder. Responses vary from neighbour disputes, suspicious incidents and anti-social behaviour. The Community Safety Team then works with partner agencies, organisations and the Police to try and resolve any tensions.

The Community Cohesion Officer has highlighted the importance of reporting hate crime on community visits. They have raised awareness on Hate Crime Awareness Week by encouraging people to say why they are supporting the week. Social media messages were distributed throughout the week on what hate crime is and how to report it. The Community Safety Team works closely with the Hate Crime Officer, and any hate crime incidents are discussed with partners in the problem-solving group that is held monthly.

Members of the Community Safety Team have completed training to grasp a greater understanding of issues within in the community. This included sexual identity and gender awareness training, what really happens when someone is referred to the Prevent programme, understanding and responding to human trafficking and slavery, fostering cohesion in education, learning from the anti-rumour approach and building resilience, community mediation and stakeholder engagement. Members of the Community Safety Team also attend GLAM, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's network for LGBT colleagues and allies.

Members of the Community Safety Team and other Vale Council Officers sit on the Channel Panel. Channel is an early intervention process which is multi-agency. The aim of the Panel is to safeguard individuals from being drawn into extremism or terrorist behaviour.

The Community Cohesion Officer works closely with community groups and organisations such as the Muslim Welfare Association to monitor any tensions.

The Community Cohesion Officer has been encouraging the completion of the European Union Settlement Scheme for citizens in the Vale from the European Union, European Economic Area or Switzerland to continue living in the UK. They have worked with agencies and organisations to encourage the completion and to offer support services.

What we have learnt?

The Safer Vale social media sites share community messages and useful information. The information links in with other partner organisations and agencies. The schools messaging system is also a good way to share messages.

The Channel Panel allows for greater partnership working, but also information, trends and resources to be shared by professionals.

The re-vamped Community Cohesion Group will look to encompass all forms of community issues. It is important that it includes a wide variety of community members.

Community visits and community engagement events are beneficial to promoting community cohesion. They encourage the reporting of community tensions.

Using awareness days to promote community cohesion and encourage reporting is a beneficial way of promoting positive messages. Social Media is a useful way to raise awareness.

What are the challenges?

The challenge is to keep promoting community cohesion and to maintain the current level of awareness of community issues. This enables us to work with partners to respond to any tensions.

What we need to do?

The Community Safety Team will continue to work in partnership to respond to any community tensions or concerns.

The Cohesion Officer will continue to communicate with community groups and members to learn of any community issues or tensions.

The re-vamped Community Cohesion Group will be launched to include more community members and will expand on what information members discuss so that the meeting is inclusive of all its members.

Anti-bullying in schools

What we have done?

We work with schools to reduce bullying with a 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 identified good practice in relation to bullying;
- monitoring of bullying incidents school by school;
- sharing this information with Challenge Advisers;
- monitoring of bullying incidents by protected characteristics;
- the development of a model bullying policy which all schools have adopted;
- support and challenge visits to schools as a result of data analysis followed up by review visits if necessary;
- the provision of model anti-bullying policies;
- suggestions for activities for anti-bullying week;

- providing safeguarding training to all schools which has included information on bullying and particularly on-line bullying;
- developing a Transgender Toolkit to provide guidance to schools – highlighting the risk of bullying with this group of young people and outlining how schools can prevent this.

We put in place model anti-bullying policies for schools and commissioned the organisation “Bullies Out” to lead on developmental work with schools.

We have commissioned Show Racism the Red Card and Stonewall to deliver 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 which we will seek to develop in future.

Show Racism the Red Card has worked in schools and community police officers have also been used to work with schools on a range of issues.

What we have learnt?

The support provided to schools has impacted positively on the support given to children and young people in schools. Estyn, the schools’ inspectorate, has recognised this by rating 98% of schools inspected since 2016 as either good or excellent for Wellbeing and Care Support and Guidance. These elements have a clear focus on children and young people feeling safe in schools.

We work very closely with the Central South Consortium to support school to school support based on sharing best practice.

We invest in central teams to support schools in meeting the needs of vulnerable groups to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential.

We realised that it was important to develop the new anti-bullying policy in consultation with young people so that it is informed by those closest to the issues. The transgender

toolkit is under review to develop this further and young people will be consulted fully in this process.

What are the challenges?

The challenges have been:

- 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.

Data analysis has informed the development of provision and services. Although we are making progress, we will continue to build on this by investing in officers to work with schools and young people. We emphasise the importance of school to school working. Schools widely do this so that they can share good practice as well as successful interventions.

It has not been possible to collect data on bullying in schools this academic year due to school closures as a result of Covid, therefore, comparison with previous data is not possible.

What do we need to do?

We are developing a new anti-bullying policy which will have an increased focus on listening to young people and particularly those from vulnerable groups. The Directorate has worked with schools and young people to develop this policy which has an increased emphasis on protected characteristics.

All schools will implement this policy. It will include more robust monitoring of bullying incidents and one-off incidents against children and young people with protected characteristics.

Equality Objective 7:

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

What we have done

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) have far-reaching consequences for families, children, communities and society as a whole. Council Services need to develop distinct and proportionate approaches to managing these issues in the Vale of Glamorgan.

In collaboration with Cardiff Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and other parties, we have developed a [5-year Regional Strategy \(2018 - 2023\)](#). Our mission is that people who live, work, study and visit our region have the opportunity to live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.

As part of that strategy, we are mindful of how we respond to the diverse needs of victims and their children, thinking about their protected characteristics. We and our partners share the values of being open-minded and respectful with a commitment to equality and diversity. We acknowledge individuality and recognise that people are not an homogenous group of victims.

Partners require these same values to be displayed within the specialist services they commission to support victims. They must commit to anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice, display non-judgemental acceptance of the victim's experiences and demonstrate understanding and empathy. Services must be inclusive, recognising specific needs and barriers to accessing support. They must also support the Equality and Human Rights Commission's stance on the delivery of helplines to ensure that female and male callers receive the same level of service.

We work in partnership with the specialist domestic abuse 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 – generic and specialist services for the Black and minority ethnic communities for those affected or at risk of domestic abuse and all forms of violence such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour based violence, human trafficking and modern slavery;
- Safer Wales Dyn Project – provides support to heterosexual, gay, bisexual and trans men who are experiencing domestic abuse from a partner;
- Rainbow Bridge - a Victim Support run service that specifically supports victims of domestic abuse who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender;
- Live Fear Free – a Welsh Government service providing help and advice about violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence;
- New Pathways – delivers current and historical sexual abuse counselling for women, men and children;
- Gwalia - a male refuge.

In the Vale, we have a Domestic Abuse Assessment Referral Co-ordinator who receives reports of all police incidents of domestic abuse. We undertake a robust risk assessment and contact victims who have given their consent to offer support and signposting. The victim's wishes determine how we approach this, depending on their individual and holistic needs. We offer this service to everyone, including those from a range of protected groups.

We submit quarterly and annual reports to Welsh Government 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.

Safer Vale organised the 'human white ribbon' event with Oakfield Primary School which gained significant positive media attention and helped raise awareness.

Safer Vale ran a successful social media campaign that focused on stalking. It helps to improve understanding of what stalking is and how victim can access information, advice and support.

The VAWDASV Manager has developed close links with the new Early Action Together service which aims to provide early identification of children at risk through domestic abuse to reduce the prevalence and impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This service involves a Police Community Service Officer (PCSO) based across the Families Achieving Change Together (FACT) Team, the Family Advice Line, Community Safety Team and the VAWDASV Team to improve early identification and subsequent communication between Services.

We are working to improve the information exchange between Regional Social Landlords who manage accommodation across the area and the Domestic Abuse Assessment and Referral Co-ordination Service (DAARC), who manage Target Hardening requests. This has ensured an improved 'wrap around service' for victims and their families. The next step is to ensure victims across the region receive a consistent, reliable service.

What we have learnt

We know that it is important to raise awareness of domestic abuse throughout the community. We do this by holding training, awareness raising days and activities. We

widely advertise these across the Vale of Glamorgan. This includes the National training framework 'Ask & Act' training delivered to local authority and health board staff.

For example, we run campaigns and awareness events throughout the year and we do this to coincide with certain events in the calendar such as the White Ribbon campaign, International Women's Day, 16 days of action, PRIDE, and Safeguarding Week.

We focus on relevant topics about violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. We promote these campaigns in a variety of ways: face to face; by engaging service users; holding conferences; using social media, radio, television and the press. Information will also be on leaflets, letter heads, and emails.

Atal y Fro, the Vale of Glamorgan's specialist domestic abuse service, advertises its services through social media, press, and awareness training events. It works with statutory and third sector to ensure it advertises its services to as many people as possible, including the rural Vale.

We play our part in embedding a whole systems approach to respond to the issues and make a positive impact for victims and survivors across the South Wales area. This includes establishing South Wales Survivor Engagement processes. SEEdS – Survivors Empowering and Educating Services - is part of this.

We have learnt that it is important to learn from victims and survivors. SEEds helped to inform the development of the [Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018 – 2023](#). Representatives of SEEdS provided quotes and valuable input into the commitments made by partners.

Survivor Engagement has continued to improve throughout 2019/20. The Welsh Government communication campaigns have been promoted widely across the region. Survivors also continue to participate in some of the region's strategic sub-groups and speak at events to share their experiences and influence services. In particular, an effective relationship has been developed with SEEdS – 'Survivors Empowering and Educating Services'. Partners have engaged with a variety of SEEdS survivors across a variety of different projects and campaigns. We have asked for the views of male victims

across South East Wales to inform commissioning activity for a dedicated male victims' service. Partners continue to capture feedback from across the range of protected characteristics and crime types, including survivors who have experienced rape and sexual assault, sex workers and those who have experienced Female Genital Mutilation.

Safer Merthyr is piloting a family intervention across the Rhondda Cynon Taf / Merthyr region. The Family Programme has adopted an early intervention, holistic family centred approach. This helps Services to meet individuals' needs, contribute to the overarching whole family outcomes, and enhance existing VAWDASV services including perpetrator interventions. The Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care, University of South Wales is undertaking an external, independent evaluation. The findings will provide an opportunity for the Cardiff and Vale Region to consider the potential benefit of delivering a similar service.

What are the challenges?

It is challenging to maintain awareness across the community so that people know where to get advice and support when they need it.

It is also a challenge to maintain the resources needed for a range of support programmes.

Towards the end of 2019 – 2020, we were unable to organise face to face events due to COVID 19. However, we continued to raise awareness and offer support on-line and through media campaigns and social media.

What do we need to do?

The Council has 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 for the next few years.

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 will continue to attend and participate in a number of regional and local steering groups so that we progress and achieve the actions and outcomes of the regional strategy and delivery plan.

We will continue to learn from the various projects that are part of the Strategy and where these have been successful in other areas, we will consider piloting them in the Vale. Examples include rolling out the DRIVE initiative – a targeted intervention for high risk offenders.

The development of a specialist service for male victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence is ongoing. Cardiff Council will lead on the procurement process on behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. We anticipated that we would commission the service during 2020, but the COVID 19 emergency has delayed our ability to progress this.

Earlier this year, RISE and the Gypsies and Travellers Wales Team met to discuss ways in which knowledge and expertise can be shared to develop reciprocal training for staff working in both areas. During 2020 – 2021, RISE-Cardiff and Atal y Fro will provide support to Gypsy and Traveller communities in the region. Local authority staff working with Gypsy and Traveller communities have completed the VAWDASV Group 1 National Framework e-learning module and will complete further training when rolled out across the region.

[The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(VAWDASV\) Regional Delivery Strategy](#) and five-year action plan is available on the [Community Safety page of the Cardiff Public Services website](#). The website also has a [one-page version of the Strategy](#) and the [annual review](#).

Equality Objective 8:

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

What we have done?

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 March 2020, the gender pay gap was 3.33%

The gender pay gap has reduced from around 9% to below 4% in a relatively short period of time. Changes to the pay structure as well as improvements in recruitment have helped with the pay gap. Due to the workforce makeup, it will be harder to reduce this at the same rate but we are constantly looking at ways to improve the gender pay gap further.

There has also been a reduction in the ethnicity pay gap. The difference in mean hourly rate between White British and Ethnic Minorities is £0.46 (£13.97 for White British and £13.52 for Ethnic Minorities) which is a reduction compared to the difference of £0.56 last year (£13.20 for White British and £12.64 for Ethnic Minorities). The mean ethnicity pay gap as a percentage is 3.29%.

We have made it a priority to attract more young people to work with us as the proportion of young staff that we employ does not reflect the proportion of young people in our community. We use apprenticeships to support this objective. We continue to offer foundation apprenticeships to young people who are 16 - 24 years old.

We attend school, college, university, and local careers job fairs to promote the range of careers and jobs we have in the Council. Our focus has been on removing the job and career stereotypes and preconceptions that many people have.

We collect data by protected characteristic and report on this annually in our Employment Information Report ([Appendix 5](#)).

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.

We support young people leaving care so they can 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, we provide training and work experience opportunities for people who have protective characteristics and /or who are long term unemployed.

We have worked with Stonewall Cymru to provide work experience opportunities to young lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person through a Stonewall scheme.

What we have learnt?

We realise that we need to take a range of measures to reduce the gender pay gap, maintain an improvement, and improve employment opportunities for protected groups. We have examples of how we have tried different approaches and the impact of these.

We introduced the Living Wage in April 2016. We enhanced the impact of this by stopping using the lowest pay point of our pay structure. Women in the workforce particularly benefitted from this.

We have used management development and succession planning to support and encourage staff to apply for job vacancies. Most of our Chief Officer appointments were made following a competitive process in which internal applicants were successful. This has resulted in a change in the gender balance of Chief Officers.

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

We have revised the appraisal system - #itsaboutme. 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 is complemented by the Council's Leadership Café which promotes the personal development of employees, helps them to network and to break down barriers.

What are the challenges?

It is difficult to quickly bring about change in these areas. It requires sustained effort over a long period of time. We will continue to monitor and address pay gaps and aim to build a workforce that is representative of the local community.

What do we need to do?

We will continue to monitor and report on the gender pay gap and the pay gap for people from ethnic minorities. We will take appropriate action to address pay gaps that we identify.

We will continue our work to attract under-represented groups to apply for Council jobs. In particular, we will continue to focus on attracting more young people to work with us so that our workforce better reflects the proportion of young people in our community.

We will continue to use management development and succession planning to support the development of our staff so that they are in a good position to take advantage of career development opportunities.

Other matters relevant to the general duty and specific duties

You will see in [Appendix 4](#) that there are a number of ways in which services have collected data and promoted equality.

In addition to this, we report on other matters that help us to promote equality below.

Equality Impact Assessments

Contributes to Equality Objectives 1, 4, and 5.

We have had a system for assessing the impact of our work on protected groups for many years. We review and improve it from time to time. We publish the results of our assessments on our website.

In January 2017, we introduced a new process for carrying out equality impact assessments. It links to guidance, research and data. It only allows officers to start the process and they then have to contact the Equality Team for advice. We hope that this will improve the quality of the assessments.

We continue to support managers to think about their work in this way. We provide training on how to carry out assessments. There is an e-learning module for people to learn on-line how to do it. We ask them to show their thinking in a formal record that we can publish.

During the last few years, it has been important for us to think about how budget changes might affect our services. As we prepare budgets, we think about how changes might affect protected groups. We also think about how we can minimise adverse impacts on them. We publish on our website the assessment of how the budget impacts on protected groups.

More recently, we have also had to think about providing services in a very different way. This is because we know that each year, for the next few years, there will be greater pressures placed on budgets. As we do this, we think about how this will affect protected groups and we talk to them about it.

Equality Training

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

We continue to provide a programme of short training sessions to make sure that staff know about new equality law. We continue to offer e-learning modules. This training covers a few areas. This includes: basic information about equality; how to assess the impact of our work on protected groups (equality impact assessments); and information about transgender issues.

People can look at the e-learning modules using the computer at their desks. They can also access them from home. This can make it easier for some people to do the training. We can monitor who has completed this type of training.

There are some staff who are unable to attend the training sessions and do not have access to e-learning modules. For these staff, we can provide a booklet that explains the key things they need to know. However, staff can now access -e-learning through their personal devices so this is now less of an issue.

We also provide other types of training from time to time such as deaf awareness training, and sexual orientation and gender identity awareness training. Gender Identity Awareness training took place in January 2020.

Procurement

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

The Council's corporate procurement process ensures that procurement processes take into account the Public Sector Equalities Duty and are compliant with statutory legislation. This includes due diligence through tender documentation.

The selection stage of the Council's procurement process has seven scored questions which can become mandatory pass or fail if required. The first question is:

“ As an employer, do you have a policy and provisions in place to ensure that your organisation and staff comply with your statutory obligations under the Equality Act 201, and accordingly, is it your practice not to discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation in relation to decisions to recruit, select, remunerate, train, transfer and promote employees?
Yes / No”

The award stage of the procurement process can also include equality and diversity requirements for evaluation.

These projects will recommence once we are safely into the recovery phase of the pandemic, and there is resource available. The contract management review is part of the Procurement team’s objectives for the coming year.

Procurement Staff have undertaken equalities training via the Council’s i-Dev online learning including the Equalities Act 2010, Trans Awareness Course and Equality Impact Assessment.

Procurement Officers usually attend the annual Welsh Government Procurex Conference to ensure they are aware of the latest initiatives and best practice on Ethical and Inclusive Procurement. This has been postponed due to the pandemic. However, we receive all Welsh Government and UK Government updates and are part of the Local Authorities Head of Procurement Network for Wales. An example of supporting equality was receiving and disseminating information regarding see-through face masks to allow for lip reading.

COVID-19 has presented challenges to the Corporate Procurement Team which has delayed plans for:

- The dissemination of the Ethical Procurement questionnaire to the Council’s supply chain. This questionnaire has been created with the intention to forward it to a random selection of contracted Council suppliers to refresh, remind and

promote diversity and inclusion issues as well as Modern Slavery and the Welsh language requirements.

- Review and internal consultation of the Council's Contract Management guidance to promote a key performance indicator for general diversity and equality issues.

These projects will recommence once we are safely into the recovery phase of the pandemic, and there is resource available. The contract management review is part of the Procurement Team's objectives for the coming year.

Disability Confident Scheme

Contributes to Equality Objective 8.

We are proud to be a member of this scheme. It recognises employers who help disabled candidates into work and support employees if they suffer ill health during their working lives.

Under the scheme, we help people with disabilities in a number of ways.

- **Accessible interviews**

We remove barriers to interviews by providing things like: car parking; signers; Braille; wheelchair access; a loop system; or interpreter.

- **Prior Consideration**

We guarantee an interview to people with disabilities so long as they meet the essential requirements of the person specification for the post.

- **Interview location**

We can arrange for a visit to the interview location before the interview. We can then make adjustments or adaptations before the interview if people need them.

- **Developing abilities**

We make sure that there is an opportunity for people to develop and use their abilities. We do this through our Personal Development Review system, #itsaboutme.

- **Supporting employees**

We support employees to stay in employment if they become disabled. We provide an occupational health service and a counselling service.

- **Raising awareness**

We arrange training to help staff know more about disability. We also advertise our commitment on our Staffnet and on posters in the building.

- **Reviewing the scheme**

We check regularly how the scheme is running and plan improvements. We have been able to trial a job experience scheme and have offered placements to several job seekers. As a direct result of this scheme: at least one person has gained paid employment; and another is gaining relevant training to support their professional qualification and enhance their employment prospects.

Stonewall Diversity Champion

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

We continued to be a member of Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme. We developed an action plan to improve the workplace for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people. This helps us to make sure that we treat people fairly when they are employees or applying for jobs.

Our work has included setting up an LGBT+ and Allies Network, relaunched in January 2019 as 'GLAM'. Network Members take part in regular meetings related to three different workstreams: workplace impact; visibility and awareness; and social and support. Each group has a number of objectives to achieve to help make the workplace more inclusive for LGBT+ people. This work has involved reviewing policies, raising awareness of issues affecting LGBT+ people, and arranging social events to network and provide support to staff. We have a GLAM webpage on our intranet.

We have LGBT+ Champions at both Member and senior management level.

We take part in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index. The WEI provides a framework to improve lesbian, gay, bi and trans inclusion in the workplace. We improved our score by 15 points, our ranking by 19 places and broke into the top 200 UK employers.

Year	Ranking	Our Score
2020	196	86 (+15)
2019	215	71 (+24)
2018	293	47

Over the last three years, the Council has continued to improve its standing in the Workplace Equalities Index. This is particularly impressive given that the number of organisations taking part has significantly increased. For example, in 2019 there were 445 organisations and in 2020 this went up to 502.

Our staff take part in a staff survey to support the WEI submission. The results show that the Council is doing well in a number of areas. For example, 85% of LGBT colleagues feel able to be themselves at work and the same number are confident reporting bullying and harassment. It was also encouraging to see that 79% of respondents knew that there was an LGBT network in the Council.

Show Racism the Red Card Campaign

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

We continue to work with Show Racism the Red Card. This is a charity that works with young people to raise awareness of racism and homophobia. It uses footballers and other sports stars as role models to do this. It delivers workshops to young people about racism and provides fun fitness sessions.

In 2019 / 2020, there were 35 workshops across 18 Vale of Glamorgan Schools, including:

- 14 primary schools;
- 3 secondary schools;

They met with 1259 children and young people from the ages of 5 to 17. At least 20% of pupils that responded to a survey had heard or witnessed racism in their school in the preceding 12 months. This has doubled since the previous year when only 10% of pupils responding to the survey said that they had heard or witnessed racism in their school in the previous 12 months.

Following the workshops, less than 5% of pupils and no teachers had witnessed any racist incidents, and 65% of pupils stated they had changed the way they treat others. More than 90% of teachers would recommend the workshops to another school.

After the workshops: the knowledge and understanding of racism amongst primary school pupils went from 43% to 90% rating as good or excellent; and confidence in talking about racism went from 40% to 65% rating as good or excellent.

In a follow up survey three months after the workshops, all teachers agreed that their confidence in delivering anti-racism education had increased, and all rated the workshops as excellent or good. Here are some of the comments they made when asked whether the workshop would affect attitudes:

‘Yes. The pupils have shown more empathy and understanding of the issue.’

‘I think it raised awareness, especially of the possibility of inadvertently being racist.’

‘We have continued the topic in my class and the students have good recollection of what they had learnt during the workshop.’

Show Racism the Red Card visited Jenner Park for an Educational club event with our partnership club Barry Town United FC. Young people from St Cyres attended the stadium to take part in the educational club event for the day.

The pupil posed some challenging and mature questions for the players. The pupils used the information from the event to write an article once they have returned to school.

Gypsy and Traveller Reporting Forum and Reporting System

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

We continue to work to identify suitable land on which to develop a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site. This is so we can meet the accommodation needs evidenced in the Vale of Glamorgan Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2016.

In the meantime, there have been many unauthorised encampments in the Vale of Glamorgan over the last year. We have recorded this information on the All Wales Caravan Count Online Collection tool, set up by Welsh Government. We have carried out welfare assessments at each encampment within twenty-four hours of being notified of them. Where people have requested services, for example, water, waste disposal and toilet facilities, we have provided them each time. Since the pandemic, we have not taken court action to remove any encampments. We waited until the residents have decided to move on themselves.

Integrated Autism Service (previously Adult Autism Advice)

Contributes to Equality Objective 8.

The Integrated Autism Service is a multiagency team of local authority and health staff covering the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan area. It provides diagnosis and support for adults with autism. The team began in 2012 and developed into the Integrated Autism Service in 2017. The Team gathers information about available services. These services come from local authorities, external service providers, and third sector organisations. The team then supports clients to access these services and provide more targeted support if there are barriers.

This work helps clients to access support or opportunities that are available to them in the wider community. Without this low-level support, they may not have known about the support opportunities or felt able to access them.

This work helps us to deliver preventative services that meet the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Integrated Autism Service short-term, targeted interventions encourage people to be independent and not to become dependent on the team. As well as signposting and support to access other opportunities the team provide a range of specific groups. Currently these are:

- A training workshop, Socialeyes developed by the National Autistic Society that helps autistic people develop social skills.
- Monthly discussion groups for adults in Barry and Cardiff.
- A group for adults with autism to learn basic life skills. This Skills for Life course includes nutrition and a range of domestic tasks and includes online safety.
- A post diagnostic group where adults learn about the condition they have been diagnosed with and how it may affect t their lives.

- A “Get Cooking” course run with the support of the dietetics team to support autistic adults to prepare healthy cost-effective meals.

Vale 50+ Strategy Forum

Contributes to Equality Objective 5.

The Forum speaks up for the needs of people aged fifty and over in the Vale of Glamorgan. Its members are in contact with many local and national working groups. The Forum has a constitution and an elected group of members called an Executive. The Executive decides how the Forum works.

The Executive meetings are open for all Forum members to attend. By attending, members can benefit from a range of interesting presentations on available services. Members also have the opportunity to express their opinions on service developments and planning.

There are four task groups working to make sure that people over fifty are able to have access to good health, transport, web development, and arts, crafts and leisure group. They try to make sure that people can learn new skills and do fun things to suit their needs. The Forum talks to the Council, Health Board, and voluntary organisations about the services they provide. The Forum also holds events every year.

The Council works closely with the Forum and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Forum. The Council gives a small grant to the Forum for members’ expenses and to pay for activities and events. The Forum uses the grant for:

- a magazine that has useful information for older people;
- a website;
- buying equipment like printers and tablets for Forum business and to teach older people how to use computers, tablets and smart phones; and

- out of pocket expenses.

From time to time, the Council and other organisations want to know what people think about their plans. To help to find out what people need, we plan different activities including talking to the Forum.

Forum Events

Age Cymru is a charity for older people. It set up an annual national arts festival called Gwanwyn. Gwanwyn is Welsh for the season of spring. It is held in May each year for older people to enjoy the arts. The Forum is actively involved in the event.

The Forum is also actively involved in events to tackle elder abuse, celebrate International Older People's Day, and to promote health and well-being.

In 2019 / 20 the Forum held events including their International Older People's Day event, International Elder Abuse Day event, a festive coffee morning and a joint coffee morning with the Friends of Belle Vue Park and the Council's Health Living Team.

Publicity

Every year, the Forum publishes a magazine called 'The Herald'. It tells people about the Forum's work and things of interest to people over 50 years of age. There are also items on services and leisure activities. Forum members produce and distribute this magazine in both English and Welsh. The [2019 / 20 edition of the Herald](#) can be seen [here](#).

The Forum have also recently made an online monthly bulletin that includes a mix of key information and service updates along with fun activities and is sent to Forum members and the wider 50+ population in the Vale.

The Forum also has its own [website](#). The website provides regular updates on topics like: latest Forum news, consultations, activities, benefits and scams. The website allows users to sign up to regular Forum newsletters. The Forum also have Facebook

and Twitter accounts. These have all been developed and updated by a member of the Forum.

Supporting Other Projects

Members of the Forum have trained to be 'digital champions'. This means that they:

- teach people about online safety;
- how to use laptops, tablets and smart phones, including e-mail and the internet.

Some Forum members have trained to be Dementia Friends Champions. They volunteer to do this. They encourage others to help people with dementia live in the community. They give them information about what dementia is, what it is like to have dementia, and what they can do to help.

Members of the Forum have been on the Age Cymru LIFT course. LIFT is the name of an activity programme. Its aim is to get older people active in their local community. The trained Forum members can now offer weekly exercise sessions. A range of community groups can attend, including people with dementia. One of these Forum members has created a toolkit to help people avoid falling. He runs sessions on preventing falls to groups throughout the Vale. This member has also qualified to offer the Age Cymru Tai Chi sessions to older people.

Some Forum members have attended First Aid training, most recently provided by the Red Cross. This was tailored to older people and included training on falls.

Forum members have trained to be advisors for Llandough Hospital Information Centre. Forum members who are on the executive group have had training to be health and well-being advisors. They work to 'to make every contact count' (MECC). They promote healthy living, screening, and vaccination services. They also work as high school mentors.

You can join the Forum if you are over fifty and live, work or volunteer in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Arts Development

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

The Arts Development Service runs an inclusive programme of opportunities activities, exhibitions and events. This programme takes place at both Art Central Gallery and in the wider community for visitors and residents. This is in line with the Council's requirements and the current Arts and Culture strategy 'An Aspirationally and Culturally Vibrant Vale 2017-22' that directly relates to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Corporate Plan, 'Strong Communities with a Bright Future'.

It is influenced by current legislation, embracing the 'Welsh Government's 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the 'Light Springs through the Dark: A Vision for Culture in Wales' report, whilst reflecting the Arts Council of Wales document, 'Inspire...A Strategy for Creativity and the Arts in Wales'.

The arts have an increasingly important role to play in supporting equalities within the arts sector and the Council's wider portfolios. The arts are a way of bringing communities together. Engaging in the arts leads to an improvement in people's quality of life, health and wellbeing.

The arts promote equality in so many ways. They encourage community cohesion, contributing to and creating opportunities for the integration of people from different backgrounds and marginalised communities. Through the arts and culture, community engagement brings creativity, learning, inspiration, sharing, connectivity, communication, health, wellbeing, enjoyment, skill development, education, and physical activity whilst impacting on equalities and other Council agendas.

The arts can also contribute to the local economy by supporting cultural tourism, allowing residents and visitors to invest in their local area. They also encourage secondary spend from visitors and residents in the Vale.

We work in partnership with arts related organisations, individuals and groups. Some examples are:

- The Women's Arts Association Wales (WAAW) supports and promotes female artists across Wales. Art Central Gallery works with WAAW to host an annual celebration of International Women's Day (8 March) to celebrate and support women in the social, economic cultural and political arena their successes, achievements and circumstances. It celebrates women artists creating art with an open art exhibition. It includes work from hobbyists to experienced professionals, all showing their work alongside each other to mark this international event. It presents works that hold messages about different aspects of life such as poverty, gender, hope, love, grief, happiness, world events politics, and pure creativeness.
- Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) is held annually on the 28 January. This year commemorated the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. To commemorate this, we hosted an exhibition researched and created by Hannelore Brenner called 'The Girls of Room 28' about the twelve thousand girls (children) that passed through the Theresienstadt camp near Prague on their way to Auschwitz. Only a few hundred girls survived from the large number that passed through the camp, to eventually have families of their own and become mothers and grandmothers. The bond and friendship of the girls from 'Room 28' lasted a lifetime, only a few remain alive today.
- We worked with the Romany Cultural and Arts Company to depict the fate of the European Roma and Sinti, an estimated 500,000 who lost their lives during the Holocaust, their story remaining largely unknown today with discrimination still significantly high in relation to the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller community.
- A mix of artists participated in HMD this year:
 - Artist Dilys Jackson's work depicted her experience at 'Greenham Common' during the early 1980's where 70,000 women, the first originating from Wales, began a peaceful protest against the import of the Trident Missiles to the UK. They left their homes and families to camp at Greenham. They lived on donations

from the public and eventually stopped the missile imports after only a few years. However, the women remained on the site for almost twenty years. The venture by these women was a complete success and remains a unique and historic achievement today.

- Artist Judy Stephens displayed her 'Comfort Blankets – What to leave...'. Large quilts portrayed and addressed migration, enforced and sudden change, panic and fear when your safety nets removed and questions what would you take with you? The work gave great thought to those who suffer great difficulties and unwanted change in their lives.
- Artist Nina Lazarou's story described the difficulties that Judy Stephens' work represented and that Lazarou's family actually endured. Lazarou's grandparents were uprooted along with another 170,000 Greek Cypriots and forced to leave their homes, possessions and their lives, never to return to their beloved country.
- We hosted a digital three-dimensional virtual experience marking the journey of the Holocaust survivor Pinchas Gutter. Gutter recounted his experience of the Majdanek concentration camp where he sadly lost his sister and parents. His only memory of his sister was her long golden plaited hair disappearing into a crowd of people, the subject of the poster promoting the virtual experience. The viewer was immersed in an experience that took them into another time and place touching their hearts and souls as they journeyed and experienced the camp of World War Two. The virtual experience showed the many elements of the camps including loss, hunger, fear, loneliness, persecution, segregation, discrimination and forgiveness. An experience second to none, it is the first virtual experience of its kind in the world. It was created by Gabro Arora and Ari Paitz in production with USC Shoah (Holocaust) Foundation the institute of visual history and education, founded by Stephen Spielberg.
- We held schools' workshops led by conflict and war artist and teacher, Nicola Tucker. Classes of thirty children visited the gallery and learnt about the work on show as well as taking part in practical drawing workshops. In groups of five, they explored fleeing their home and landing on an island. They were asked to think

about what they would take with them and how they would survive and rebuild their home on an island. They worked in teams to draw their ideas. They learnt about teamwork and sharing and developing ideas, creatively imagining an island and what they could do to survive. They all enjoyed the activity addressing issues about difference, separation, migration, survival, segregation and facts about the Second World War which they had also been learning about in school.

- We have over the years marked the atrocities of the Holocaust and other world Genocides such as Bosnia, Rwanda and Syria, Darfur with some of these and others still ongoing today.
- We engage with the Fifty Plus Forum for Arts and Leisure. We have supported this group by organising gallery 'walk and talks' and artist presentations and talks. Working closely with the group, we regularly update them about openings, arts events and opportunities that they can attend and participate in.
- Working with the Council's LGBT+ Network, GLAM, we marked this year's 'Stonewall 20' event in February. Stonewall is an organisation that supports individuals to make a difference for LGBT people at work, home and in communities to challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobic bullying. An evening presentation was held in Art Central Gallery, with an audience of about forty people attending the event. Talks were given by the Leader of the Council, Cllr Neil Moore, local Theatre Director and actor Jordan Force, followed by a short theatrical performance of an excerpt of a play written by Force. This was the first LGBT event held with the GLAM and we hope to hold more in the future.
- Annually we work in partnership with Cardiff and Vale College to support their end of year show. The students, from all backgrounds, produce a variety of work in career development. Through the artists' work, they address issues on gender, health and well-being such as mental and physical issues and cultural tourism amongst other topics. This annual exhibition provides the opportunity for students to show their work in a professional environment, contributing to their CV, professional development and future career opportunities as upcoming artists.

The Arts Council of Wales' Night Out scheme

We have continued with the partnership and promotion of the Arts Council of Wales' Night Out Theatre, a Wales wide scheme. It helps groups of volunteers across the Vale to bring the performing arts to the heart of their communities. Working in conjunction with the Vale of Glamorgan's Arts Development Service, the Night Out scheme provides access to high quality theatre productions suitable for small community venues and all ages. Operating a guarantee against loss for the events, it enables communities to access high quality performance art for all, particularly those in low-income areas in their local community centre, village halls and other non-traditional theatre venues. These supported, affordable events contribute to the local arts and wider economies providing a platform for performers in Wales and further afield to reach local communities. As communities usually organise these events, they contribute to community cohesion, collaboration, neighbourhood collectiveness and up-skilling local communities. The events target young people and enable them to learn new skills in marketing, sales and event organisation. They are guided by arts professionals competent in these areas to enable them to take ownership of their event and broaden their learning and skills contributing to their personal and professional career development whilst making theatre accessible to all.

We worked with 'Iron Maidens', a group of female sculptors using cast iron as their sculptural medium. The exhibition, held at Art Central Gallery, was called Iron Maidens II: Made in Wales. The group originally formed following a collaborative exhibition touring as 'Iron Maidens' between 2009 -14 with artists from the UK and the US. Today, 'Iron Maidens II' are Wales-based sculptors excited by the natural processes and nature of cast iron. They show their work with the aim of inspiring the viewer to engage in the beauty of this material and encourage others to use and explore its many possibilities. The exhibition was filmed and produced in the Welsh language appearing on 'Heno' - a Welsh medium television programme.

As part of this exhibition, we showed work by Line & Form - a small group of female artists. This is a touring exhibition by four sculptors whose art explores the natural world through their materials, carving, casting and installations, using line as an integral

element of their practice, with the repetition of line over flat or rounded surfaces to create form.

The Arts Service supports a number of local organisations that help with health and wellbeing including Mind in the Vale and the Dementia Friendly Barry. Dementia Friendly Barry supports and contributes to the Dementia Awareness Week and we held an event at Golau Caredig in Barry.

The Art Service has supported the Vale adult learning network and other adult learning groups. We have held a number of adult learning award events at Art Central Gallery with organisations including the Welsh Language Learning Awards, the 'Inspire Awards', Cardiff and Vale College and Adult Learning which provide learning opportunities for adults including learning English as a foreign language, often for people who have moved to the UK from other countries. Art Central Gallery was also the venue for the 'Cryw Celf' art workshop programme for talented young people who are more able receiving high-quality art classes led by arts professionals, specialising in their chosen field and working professionally in the industry.

A programme of public art projects funded through Section 106 funds from new development sites in the Vale of Glamorgan are led by artists who specialise in the development of Public Art. They lead workshops that engage with the local community and schools imparting their knowledge, upskilling participants and ensuring that there is ownership for the projects by the local community. The programme enables participants to realise that there are career opportunities in these practices that are reminiscent of an architect's skill set, engaging in design, CAD and technical drawing, creative development and technical, practical skills. Some of the projects to date are a multi-use skate park, the 'Skytown', 'Arcot Triangle', and Paget Road, Penarth as well as multiple projects in Barry, Cowbridge, Rhose and other areas in the rural Vale.

The arts and culture are part of everyday life, enriching and embracing our lives by promoting culture and equality. Our exhibitions, events, projects and creative opportunities engage with creative people from the professional sector, the local community and visitors and help to promote equality and community cohesion.

Leisure Services

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

We provide play and sports schemes and events through our Sports and Play Development Team.

Sports Development

The Healthy Living Team run a number of inclusive programmes. We target groups of people with protected characteristics and groups of people where there is evidence of low participation. We are proud of the fair opportunities we provide through a number of partnerships and joint working. However, in the past few years and, particularly since introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations, it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain equalities data from user groups.

Listed below is some further information about specific relevant projects.

Junior Sport Programme

The aim of the Junior Sport Programme is to get more children of primary school age taking part in sport. It helps to improve basic skills. This includes balance, co-ordination, agility and spatial awareness.

The programme encourages children to take part in fun sports sessions and physical activities after school and in the community. Where we can, we make links between schools and local communities so that pupils can be active outside school hours.

We want children of all abilities to take part in the activities. The Sports Development Team uses its knowledge to make this possible. The Team provides awareness training to other people involved in delivering activities.

Every school in the Vale can take part in the Junior Sports Programme with the support of the Sports Development Team. This includes mainstream schools which have

disabled pupils and Ysgol y Deri. Ysgol y Deri provides for a diverse range of differently able pupils.

As part of the Junior Sports Programme, there is a primary school sport festival calendar. We invite schools to take part in fun tournaments and non-competitive festivals. At certain festivals, we aim to involve children and young people who are inactive or who do not usually get an opportunity to represent their school.

Here is a list of some of the opportunities that took place in the Vale.

- Vale Wide Cricket Festival
- Cross Country Championships
- Vale Wide Primary Schools' Netball Festival
- Vale Quad Kids' Festival (Athletics)
- Year 1 and 2 Multiskills Festivals in cluster areas
- Year 3 and 4 Multiskills Festivals
- Year 5 and 6 Multiskills Festivals

'5 x 60' Scheme

The '5 x 60' Scheme is for secondary school pupils. It offers them opportunities to take part in sport or physical activity during lunchtimes and after school. The aim of the scheme is to get more young people involved in physical activity, especially those who are inactive or hard to reach.

We provide a range of activities in each secondary school throughout the Vale. We consult with children to find out what activities they want to participate in. Sessions take place that specifically target one or more groups such as girls, inclusion and certain year groups and pupils who are less active.

As well as specific sessions, the '5 x 60' scheme in the Vale prides itself on creating inclusive environments where anyone can attend. This includes girls, pupils with disabilities, and Black and minority ethnic pupils. They feel more at ease taking part in physical activity as they have the support of the Active Young People Officer and the Activity Co-ordinator in that school. Sessions are free so money is not a barrier to taking part.

Leadership

Young Ambassador Scheme

To go alongside the Junior Sports Programme and '5 x 60' Scheme, the Healthy Living Team has created a strong leadership programme for children and young people in the Vale of Glamorgan.

We recognised that pupils in primary and secondary schools could take on a large amount of responsibility to shape how sport and physical activity looks in each of their schools. Through these findings, the Young Ambassador Scheme has flourished.

Young Ambassadors aim to:

- increase participation and healthy lifestyles;
- promote the positive values of sport;
- be an ambassador, role model and young people's voice for physical education (PE) and school sport.

In primary schools, we have identified Bronze Young Ambassadors and helped them to develop appropriate skills to do the job. They must meet standards by the end of the school year. This includes options that will improve physical activity levels in the school. The Ambassadors can act as a pupils' voice so that the school listens to their ideas and acts on them.

Pupils in secondary schools can apply to be Silver Ambassadors (Year 9) and Gold Ambassadors (Year 10 upwards). They have more complex standards to meet. They also take on more responsibility. This year one of the Silver Young Ambassadors we recruited was a child looked after by our local authority.

The standards for each level of Young Ambassador include actions on how the school can become more inclusive. The standards target specific groups and provide more opportunities for them.

The Young Ambassador Scheme prides itself on being fully inclusive and offering all pupils the opportunity to apply for the scheme. Each primary school can nominate one boy and one girl to promote equality. Pupils with disabilities and pupils who are Black or from a minority ethnic background have been successful in representing their school as a Young Ambassador.

Coaches of the Future Scheme

'Coaches of the Future' is part of the Vale of Glamorgan's Olympic legacy programme to help inspire a generation of participants and coaches.

The programme aims to provide an introduction to coaching and volunteering in sport, dance, and other physical activities. It provides training and hands on experience of coaching in schools and / or the community.

The Scheme has been running for a number of years and has seen a number of coaches completing the scheme, including people with protected characteristics that have been less represented in the past.

Leaders' Courses

The Vale Sports Development Team offers a range of leadership courses for potential coaches. We can modify these to suit the learner's needs. Many people have attended these courses over the past year, with a wide variety of learners attending.

Disability Sport

The Vale of Glamorgan Sports and Play Development Department is Insport Bronze accredited and working towards Silver accreditation. The Team showed commitment to being inclusive in its policies, plans, and programmes of activity. Insport is a national programme for Sport Development Departments in every local authority. It helps them to showcase how their programmes are open to a diverse range of people.

The Disability Sport Wales Development Officer post is a part time role. We receive grant funding to support this role. The aim of the role is to work with a number of partners and organisations to increase the amount of disabled people taking part in sport and physical activity. A number of partners and organisations work with the Disability Sport Wales Development Officer. These include schools and community clubs. The Disability Sport Wales Development Officer can offer advice on ways to be inclusive.

The officer can also help people to develop skills to lead disability sport activities. We have run a number of Disability Awareness courses. These range from: Disability Inclusion Training - Active Kids for All (school staff); Autism Awareness Training for Sport Leaders; and a new initiative for primary school pupils known as Admiral Play Together which is an inclusion course aimed at Primary School pupils in year 5 and 6.

There are in excess of 60 different types of sport clubs and groups that offer sport opportunities for a diverse range of people, including those with disabilities. A number of these clubs have achieved Insport Clubs Accreditation during 2019/2020.

- 1 club have achieved Gold Standard
- 3 Clubs have achieved Silver Standard;
- 4 Clubs have achieved Bronze Standard;
- 9 Clubs have achieved Ribbon Standard.

We run Swimability Lessons in Barry, Penarth and Llantwit Major Leisure Centres. These lessons teach swimming to children from the age of 5.

We work with the Disability Sport Wales Talent ID Programme. We have identified talented athletes and passed on this information to the Talent ID Officer. The scheme offers these athletes high class training, mentoring, and additional advice. Currently the Vale have 2 athletes in the Performance Pathway with one winning a National title.

The Vale of Glamorgan Sports and Play Development department prides itself on creating opportunities for disabled people to take part in sport. We make sure this happens in an environment that suits a range of individual needs.

Women and girls

As part of our sports plan, we have a plan called 'Women and Girls on the Move'. It aims to get more women and girls involved in sport. This is a priority for one of our funders, Sports Wales, and for our own sports plan and looks to address the inequalities in participation between genders.

Opportunities included: school-club links, female specific projects in schools, social running and cycling, dance, opportunities within Girl-Guiding and supporting children from domestic abuse backgrounds to be able to access equipment. Such projects have contributed to approximately 3900 participations. We have trained new coaches and continue to encourage women and girls to get involved in sport.

BAME community

Anyone can join in our sports activities. However, some of our activities have attracted individuals from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic groups. This includes the Girls' Club run at St Cyres Comprehensive School. The girls feel more comfortable taking part in activities where boys are not involved.

Welsh language

As part of the 5 x 60 Scheme, we run activities at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg through medium of Welsh for which there were 2131 participations for which we have a partnership with Urdd Bobath Cymru. Welsh primary schools are offered appropriate opportunities

including leadership opportunities and participations in events (Welsh language led where available).

Other

As part of the Sport and Physical Activity Plan, we targeted other groups: those living in areas of deprivation; older people; and people living in rural areas. This included 'Older People More Active', and 'Doorstep Sports' (Llandough, Rhose, and Barry) and mental health projects. We have also undertaken work targeting areas of deprivation as data illustrates that there are lower levels of physical activity in areas of deprivation.

Tackling inequality

We manage the Community Chest fund. We get this from Sport Wales. Clubs can apply for money to increase sports opportunities in the community. The clubs can use some of this money to deal with inequality. This helps to improve opportunities for different groups including:

- people who are Black, Asian or from ethnic minorities;
- women and girls;
- disabled people; and
- people from deprived areas.

Promoting sports

We use pictures of under-represented groups when we promote our sports. We hope this encourages a diverse range of people to join in sports.

Results

Some other results from these various initiatives in 2019 / 20 include:

- Walking Football – Duffers Utd are now linked to Barry Town Utd.

- Parkinson's Welsh Football – Several of the team members are aged 50+.
- Disability Inclusion Training – Sports Development Officers 10 attendees, Community Coaches and Volunteers, 12 attendees.
- Sport Inclusion Training – 22 Play Workers, 8 volunteers from World at Play.
- Mental Health Training by Mind – 13 attendees.
- Admiral Play Together – 453 year 5 and 6 pupils completed the training.
- Sports Development team received Dementia Training from Dementia Friendly Barry.
- Couch 2 5k – 60 runners attended including 9 disabled participants.
- Parkinson's Welsh Football – club started in Barry thanks to funding from the Sports Development Team and Community Chest, the membership grew from 7 to 14.
- Working in partnership with Sport Cardiff and Noah's Ark Hospital to support young people aged 4 - 14 in their Cope Cakes programme. This programme gives each individual the coping methods to help with anxiety and other mental health conditions.
- Supported the Welsh Sports Association for People with a Learning Disability Athletics and Swimming events. Over 300 athletes took part in the Athletics heats and finals along with 150 swimmers in the National Gala.
- Vale Adult Boccia League.
- Junior Boccia Festival.
- Boccia on the Beach.
- WSAPLD – National Athletics and Swimming Events.

Exercise Referral

We run an exercise referral scheme. This is where doctors refer people to us to help them recover from illness or injury. The scheme is open to everyone and attracts significant use from protected groups.

Leisure Centres

Our Leisure Centre management partner, Legacy Leisure, are also committed to ensuring both compliance with the Council's equality objectives and in providing fully accessible services.

Various initiatives are on-going in this respect with new activities planned for 2020 / 21 that specifically target under-represented groups.

Parks

We are proud that we have ten 'green flag' parks. We have to show a commitment to equality as part of the assessment to get a green flag for a park. We have done different things in different parks to achieve this. Things we have done include:

- improving access for disabled people;
- providing specialist play equipment;
- providing work experience opportunities for protected groups, such as those with learning difficulties.

Electoral Services

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

To encourage eligible residents of the Vale of Glamorgan to register to vote, the Electoral Registration Team has undertaken various activities to ensure registering to vote to available to all.

We held the following events:

- Freshers Fayre Colcot Road Cardiff and Vale College – face to face appointments took place late 2019 and online in 2020.

- Freshers Fayre ICAT Cardiff Airport – face to face appointments took place late 2019 and online in 2020.
- Millennial Marketing Competition with Cardiff and Vale College, Dumballs Road, Cardiff – a staff member was invited to be an examiner for young people creating a business case to help register young people.
- UK Parliament week – social media campaign aimed at young people.
- International Youth Day – social media campaign.
- Local Democracy Week – social media campaign.
- Care homes – facilitated a point of contact in each Vale of Glamorgan care home, to ensure that vulnerable adults are able to register without barriers.
- Hostels, homeless residents, and housing agencies – weekly movement sheets provided to us by the Homelessness Department to ensure that we can encourage homeless residents to still register to vote.
- We distribute all our social media output for sharing to the Vale of Glamorgan's Regional Resettlement Officer, who works with Syrian nationals who have resettled in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Schools – Social media and resources pack shared for distribution on Google classroom and other platforms to encourage registration for young people.

Learn Welsh in the Vale Programme

Contributes to Equality Objective 4.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh funds the Learn Welsh the Vale programme on behalf of Welsh Government. The programme provides Welsh classes for adults at all levels of learning across the Vale. The courses are available to all adults who are 16 years +.

We provide the courses with grant subsidy but mainstream courses (which run for 30 weeks per year) are chargeable to the learner for a fee of £90. Concessions of 40% are available to learners on means-tested benefits. We invite all learners to apply to the National Centre for Learning Welsh for payments from a Financial Contingency fund. The fund can pay for additional resources and costs of attending classes, including travelling and childcare costs.

We offer taster courses free of charge and we provide them free to parents in some schools in partnership with Get Back on Track and Flying Start. Some additional discounts also apply at particular times of year, such as 20% early bird. Payments are usually made by learners via the national Learn Welsh website, however cash and cheque payments are accepted at the Learn Welsh office, and learners with financial difficulties can arrange to pay in small cash instalments subject to the manager's discretion.

Enrolment criteria

Any adult can enrol on Welsh courses, whatever their language background. Experienced staff offer a free level check and advice as to which level is appropriate.

We welcome and support Welsh school leavers and other adults who wish to rekindle their use of the language through courses and additional services which include social events, celebrations and family provision.

We encourage advanced level learners to participate in social activities in local Welsh language groups such as Merched y Wawr and Cymrodorion y Barri. The National Centre for Learning Welsh supports the Siarad programme in which learners are paired with a fluent Welsh speaker to spend time conversing and socialising in Welsh.

Flexibility

We offer a range of courses in the daytime and evening to maximise opportunities. These are at a range of venues throughout the Vale of Glamorgan to support those in rural areas.

Learners can access most venues by public transport.

Crèche

We offer free crèches at main centres for parents and carers attending daytime classes. This enables parents to access learning and training opportunities with childcare support. We timetable courses to allow for parents to fit around children in school.

Partnership

Working with a range of organisations and stakeholders the service is able to promote learning opportunities to the entire community in Cardiff and the Vale. Partnership events and social media help ensure that information is accessible to all.

Disability Access

All centres are accessible to disabled users and have appropriate access for example, lifts, ramps and toilet facilities. Additional equipment including hearing loops, lamps, adapted keyboards is available to support sensory impaired learners.

Family Learning

An additional grant from the National Centre for Learning Welsh pays for the Innovative Project, Clwb Ni - a Welsh-medium and bilingual homework club for children in Welsh school and their parents. The Club is run in the Palmerston area of Barry and provides free refreshments and snacks to families as well as activities for all ages to support language development.

Welsh Medium

Learn Welsh the Vale supports the Get Back on Track programme to provide adult education courses. We offer this programme through the medium of Welsh. We provide some regular courses and events for adults and their families to communicate in Welsh and to practice and improve their Welsh language skills.

Additional Learning Needs

Learners have the opportunity to state when enrolling that they have a condition or diagnosis of any additional learning needs. This information is available to the management staff of Learn Welsh the Vale and we train tutors to adapt their methods so that we can fully include learners with additional needs in learning activities. Where that need involves the provision of adapted materials, the Learn Welsh office staff support the tutor in various ways, such as by producing large print resources for visually impaired learners. The Exams Officer supports learners sitting WJEC Welsh for Adults exams and arranges exam considerations according to need.

Job Evaluation

Contributes to Equality Objective 8.

We have a job evaluation scheme in place. This scheme is for staff paid under the Single Status collective agreement. It makes sure that there is a systematic way of deciding on the pay and grade for a job. This results in equal pay for work of equal value. The results of job evaluation are linked to our pay and grading system. We put in place a formal pay and grading system in March 2012 following conclusion of an extensive job evaluation process.

It has helped us to pay people fairly and in a consistent way.

There are other factors that affect people's pay such as the type of jobs that they choose to do. Men and women often choose to do jobs that men and women have traditionally done. We call this occupational segregation. It often plays a part in there being a gap between the pay of men and women – a gender pay gap.

As part of our Workforce Plan, we continue to look for ways to reduce the gender pay gap. Since 2012, we assess new and changing jobs through our job evaluation system. As part of this, we think about a number of factors including the knowledge, skills and experience people need to do the job. There are many changes like this as we

reorganise our departments and think about how we can best do our work. Using this approach keeps pay and grading fair and consistent.

The Workforce Plan (2016 – 2020)

Contributes to Equality Objective 8.

We have a workforce plan for the period 2016 – 2020. This plan makes sure that we have:

- the right people;
- with the right skills;
- in the right place;
- at the right time.

This helps us to continue to provide our services at a time when there are great financial challenges and increasing demand for our services. We plan to make sure that the make-up of our workforce is similar to the make-up of the local community in terms of protected groups.

We have put in place a way of recording the protected characteristics of our staff. This means we can compare our statistics with local and national statistics to see what progress we are making. We can then plan how to make improvements.

As part of the Workforce Plan, we have a strategy to look at increasing the number of employees aged 16 – 24. The focus is on attracting this age group to the Council through apprentice, trainee and graduate opportunities, as well as offering work experience opportunities. We work with local schools and universities to talk about the roles available within the Council and encourage this group to see the Council as an employer of choice offering career opportunities. This enables us to offer quality employment to the 16 - 24 age group, providing career and personal development.

As part of the strategy we are building relationships and developing offerings with local educational institutions including Cardiff University, University of South Wales and Cardiff and Vale College. We are striving to offer the full range of apprenticeships available in Wales. We have put in place a system for new job listings. Hiring managers must check with the Organisational Development and Learning Team whether the role could be suitable for an apprenticeship. The apprenticeship scheme is promoted both inside and outside the organisation.

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Specified employment information, including information on training and pay

We have been collecting employment data for many years. We have collected information on the following protected characteristics:

- gender;

- race;
- disability; and
- age.

We have continued to develop new systems. This will let us report on more protected characteristics in the future. We will be able to collect and record information on:

- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- gender identity;
- national identity;
- religion or belief; and
- marital status.

We wanted to focus on some key actions. To help us, we used guidance from the Welsh Government. The name of the guidance is 'Collecting Equality Data: Harmonised Standards and Best Practice'.

We changed the form we use to collect information about people when they apply for jobs.

We now ask about all protected characteristics on the form. You can see the form in [Appendix 3](#).

We developed a staff survey. We used this to ask staff about their protected characteristics.

We improved the way we record this information. Doing this helps to improve what we know about protected groups within our workforce.

We have looked at the information that we have collected. You can see what we have found out in [Appendix 5](#) of this report. Here is a summary of the headlines by protected characteristic below.

Age

- Since 2015 / 2016, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people we employ in the 60+ age group but a decrease in the number of people aged between 16 and 24. For 2019 / 2020, this trend reversed and there was a decrease in the number of people we employed in the 60+ age group but an increase in the number of people aged between 16 and 24.
- There was a slight drop in the average salary for employees in the 16 - 19 age group. The average salary for people in other age ranges increased.
- People who were between 40 and 44 years of age had the highest average salary. This is a change from the 35 to 39 age group which had the highest average salary in the previous year.
- Due to the increase in the number of apprentices now working for us, there has been an increase in the number of employees whose salary is under £15,000.
- The highest proportion of people attending training came from the 50 - 54 age group - 127 or 16.2%. This is the same as the previous year where the highest proportion of people attending training was the 50 - 54 age group at 249 or 15.4%.
- The highest percentage of applications was from people in the 25 - 29 age band (16.1%). This was also the highest band in the previous year (17.3%).
- There was an increase in the number of applications from most age groups.

- Most people who left were between 60 and 64 years of age. This increased from 43 to 45 in number but decreased in overall percentage from 16.8% to 14.8%. Fewer people left in the age groups 25 - 29, 50 – 54 and 55- 59.

Disability

- 81.7% of our staff did not have a disability. 2.6% said they had a disability that limited them a little.
- The number of people employed who told us they had a disability that limited them a lot has decreased since the previous year.
- The average salary for those with disabilities and those with no disabilities increased since the previous year as well as for those who have not recorded or preferred not to say whether they have a disability.
- The average salary for those who said they had a disability was £28,210 compared to £25,519 for those with no disability, £26,272 for those with a disability that limited them a little, and £27,901 for those with a disability that limited them a lot.
- 3.1% of people who attended training had a disability that limited them to some extent.
- There was a slight increase in the percentage of applicants who said that they had no disability (88.4%) compared to the previous year (87.2%).
- The number of leavers who said they had no disability increased from 213 to 262 since the previous year.

Gender Reassignment

- The number of people who told us they are female or male at birth has decreased but the overall percentage remains very similar to the previous year. There was a

decrease in the number of employees who chose to record their gender at birth compared to the previous year.

Marital Status

- The number of those who are married has decreased from 1305 to 1178 but remains the highest category in marital status for employed staff.
- Those who told us they were single has increased from 854 to 869 since the previous year.

Maternity, Paternity, and Adoption

- There were 27 employees who had maternity, paternity or adoption pay and leave during 2019 / 20. This number has decreased by 43 when compared to the previous year.
- There were 27 people who had training in the same year as they had maternity, paternity or adoption leave. This is a decrease from the 46 people from the previous year.

National Identity

- Most employees said they were British or Welsh.
- The number of applicants who said they were Welsh is now the highest identity for applicants at 52.4%. This has increased from 34.3% and replaces British as the highest national identify for applicants.

Race and Ethnicity

- Most employees were White - over 84% - which is a slight decrease on the previous year (87%).

- For people with White ethnic backgrounds, pay increased for those in eight out of the nine groups since the previous year. Only White and Asian had a decrease.
- There was a decrease in pay for people in the groups Caribbean, Indian, Other and not disclosed groups. There was an increase in pay for all the other ethnic groups and those who chose not to record their ethnicity.
- The difference in mean hourly rate between White British and Ethnic Minorities is £0.46 (£13.97 for White British and £13.52 for Ethnic Minorities) which is a reduction compared to the difference of £0.56 last year (£13.20 for White British and £12.64 for Ethnic Minorities). The mean ethnicity pay gap as a percentage is 3.29%.
- The difference in median hourly rate between White British and Ethnic Minorities is £0.50. The median ethnicity pay gap as a percentage is 4.09%.
- 70.8% of employees who attended training were White and British. This was a slight decrease on the previous year. (73%).
- White and British remains the highest category for applicants at 78.2%. Almost 89% of people applying for jobs were White which is similar to the previous year (90%).
- Over 88% of leavers were White. There was an increase in the percentage of White and British leavers which remains the highest ethnic group for leavers at 67.2%. The number not recorded remained the same at 25.

Religion or Belief

- Most staff either had no religion (35.7%), were Christian (31.3%); or did not record their religion or belief (28.8%).
- Most applicants stated that they had no religion (54.3%) which was an increase compared to the previous year (50.3%).

- There was an increase in the number of applicants that said their religious belief was Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, no religion, other and preferred not to say. Those who told us they were Christian increased in number (936 to 981) but decreased in percentage (32% to 30.3%)
- Those applicants who did not record their religion decreased from 347 to 269.

Gender

Our workforce was 67.2% (1722) female and 32.8% (841) male. The number of female employees went down from 1843 to 1722 and the number of male employees also decreased from 864 to 841. In January 2020, a large number of employees moved from the Vale of Glamorgan Council to a separate Catering company, called Big Fresh Catering Company Limited. The majority of these staff were female. This will account for the difference in numbers of females from the previous year. This has also reduced the gender pay gap from what was shown in the previous year.

- Over two thirds of the people we employ are female. It is typical to find that more women than men work in local authorities.
- Most females continued to work in permanent part time jobs (665 employees in 2019/2020). This has decreased from the 798 in the previous year. The number of females in permanent full-time jobs has increased from 605 to 618.
- Most males continued to work in permanent full-time permanent jobs (536 employees in 2019/2020). This has decreased from the 558 in the previous year. The number of males in the part time permanent positions has increased from 94 to 105 since the previous year.
- The gender balance of Chief Officers changed with one more female and one less male. There are now 24 female and 24 male Chief Officers employed.

- 41.9% of women and 40.3% of men held jobs paid between £15,000 - £19,999. 41.4% of all jobs are paid between £15,000 and £19,999 which is a decrease on the previous year where 46.4% of all jobs were paid at this salary band.
- Average pay for women increased more than for men. This was the same as the previous year. There was a £1572 rise for women compared to £1072 rise for men.
- The difference in mean hourly rate between Male and Female is £0.48 (£14.29 for male and £13.81 for female) which is a reduction (£0.86) compared to last year (£13.78 for male and £12.92 for female). The mean gender pay gap as a percentage of men's pay is 3.36%.
- The difference in median hourly rate between Male and Female is £0.97. The Median gender pay gap as a percentage of men's pay is 7.54%. This is lower than the UK figure. In the UK, the Median Gender Pay Gap is 8.6% (Office of National Statistics).
- More than 76% of the people who attended training were female. This has increased since the previous year from 71.4%. The percentage of people who attended training and are male has decreased from 28.6% to 23.2%.
- Over two thirds of people applying for jobs were female (65.5% or 2120). This is in comparison to 29.8% or 966 that were male.
- The number who did not disclose their gender on applying for jobs increased significantly from 28 to 152.
- More women than men left their jobs. We would expect this as we employ more women than men. The percentage of people who left their jobs and were female increased on the previous year (69.5% compared to 62.9%) and the percentage of people who left their jobs and were male decreased (30.5% compared to 37.1%).

Sexual Orientation

- Most of our staff said they were heterosexual (67.3%). There was little change in the number who said they were gay or lesbian. Those that are bisexual has increased. There were fewer employees who did not tell us their sexual orientation.
- When looking at the pay of lesbian, gay, or bisexual employees, 44% were employed in the salary band £0 - £19,999.
- We have started to monitor the success of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people from application to successful appointment. For 2019 / 2020, there were 152 applications and 20 successful appointments (13%) compared to 20 out of 125 in the previous year (16%). This covers both internal and external vacancies within the Council.
- The total percentage of applicants who said they were bisexual, gay or lesbian slightly increased to 4.4% from 3.8% in the previous year. The percentage of applicants who said they were heterosexual remains the highest (84.4%).

Welsh Language

- Just under a third of our staff have some level of Welsh language skills: understanding 31.2%; speaking 26.2%; reading 23.5%; and writing 17.6%.
- Of those employees with Welsh language skills, those who have a good understanding of Welsh had the highest average pay (£32,507).
- Welsh language skills for applicants were as follows: understanding 46.5%; speaking 39.9%; reading 35.5%; and writing 29.6%.

We will continue with this work. We want to be able to report on all protected characteristics.

We do not have all the information that we need to collect to meet the general and specific duties. The reasons for this are:

- reporting systems need further updating;
- some staff choose not to disclose personal information;
- extra and up-to-date data on protected characteristics needs to be collected;
- limited guidance meant we had to clarify what we had to report on.

We have improved our data on Welsh language. We surveyed all our staff to get up to date information on Welsh language skills. This was to meet the Welsh Language Standards set out from 1 April 2016.

Even when we make these improvements, we may not get the information we need. We think some people will choose not to tell us about some of their protected characteristics. We encourage people to do so by explaining:

- why we are asking for this information; and
- how we can use it to better meet their needs.

The information for this report comes from systems in Human Resources. This means that the information is as correct and complete as possible. We know that we will need to continue to work on this information for future reports. This will help us meet the requirements of the general duty.

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