

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019



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Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019

Extension to April 2020

The Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019 was adopted by Council on 14 October 2015.

The Plan was published six months earlier than was legally required due to the changing legislative landscape and requirements for the production of corporate plans. This included the change in corporate planning requirements from the setting of improvement objectives (Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009) to the setting of well-being objectives (Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 requires the Council to set equality objectives and to publish them in a Strategic Equality Plan and the 2015 Strategic Equality Plan was published six months early in order to align the above planning and improvement arrangements.

However, the reporting requirements for the above arrangements are different and over time it has been difficult to provide a comprehensive picture of the difference the two plans are making in terms of equalities.

By extending the current Strategic Equality Plan to April 2020, more time will be available to improve the alignment of the Plan for the period 2020-2024 with the Corporate Plan 2020-2023 which is currently being developed (also to be published in April 2020). This will also provide more time to consider the reporting arrangements to enable a more comprehensive assessment of the impact the two planning and improvement arrangements are making in terms of equalities.

The extension will also enable the outputs of various pieces of work that are currently in progress to be taken into consideration when developing the revised Strategic Equality Plan. Those pieces of work include the review of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy (the renamed Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy), the exploration of the requirements and impact of the soon to be introduced socio-economic duty as well as the outputs of the Poverty Symposium held in October 2019.



Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Equality Act 2010
3. Description of the authority
4. Engagement and Employment
5. Equality Impact Assessments:
6. Training and communication
7. Equality Objectives
8. Action Plan



1. Introduction

This Plan and associated action plan have been revised within the current financial context and support the Council's corporate improvement objectives which have been recently published in the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan for the period 2015-2018.

The focus of year 1 of the action plan is to ensure actions are in place to meet the objectives we have set and measurable outcomes are delivered. During year 2, Heads of Service will monitor the impact of the delivery of those actions. Year 3 will focus on reviewing the outcomes of the monitoring exercise to identify any additional actions that require inclusion in the action plan, which will then inform future Plans.

2. The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010, brought together and replaced previous anti-discrimination legislation, simplified and strengthened the law, removed inconsistencies and made it easier to understand for everyone. By implementing the Act our aim is to work towards creating a fairer society, improving public services, addressing entrenched inequalities and ultimately improving people's lives.

The Council, along with other public bodies, is required under the Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations amongst and between people of different protected groups (known as the Public Sector Duty).

The protected groups, or characteristics, are:

- age
- gender reassignment
- sex
- race
- disability
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- religion and belief
- marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the need to eliminate discrimination)



Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

In Wales specific duties have been introduced to help us carry out the public sector duty and these include the production of a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and the development and publication of equality objectives.

3. Description of the Authority

Neath Port Talbot County Borough is located on the coast between Swansea and Bridgend and covers an area of over 44,217 hectares. As of 2011 census it has a population of 139,812 and 62,957 dwellings. It also shares boundaries with Carmarthenshire County Council, Powys County Council, Brecon Beacons National Park and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The main urban areas are in Port Talbot, Neath and Pontardawe. The valley areas comprise the Afan, Amman, Dulais, Neath, and Swansea Valleys with extensive upland areas between. The valleys intersect the urban areas and are defined by spectacular scenery and a network of close-knit communities

Neath Port Talbot has the 8th highest population density of the 22 local authorities across Wales. There are 14 areas in the county borough within the top 10% of the most deprived communities in Wales, most of which are designated Communities First areas.

It is expected that the population will grow by 7,000, an increase of about 5%, by 2021. Whilst the under-65 population is expected to remain stable, the increase anticipated in the over-65 population is significant.

According to the 2011 Census, black and minority ethnic groups account for 2.1% of the population compared to 4% in Wales.

Data from schools indicates that the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds (non-white British) is 4.6% compared to the Wales average of 8.2%.

There are two authorised gypsy traveller caravan sites in the county borough with an estimated population of 236.

At the 2011 Census, of those people indicating a religion, faith or belief, 57.7% described themselves as Christian, 33.8% indicated that they have no religion, 7.3% did not state a religion and those remaining were Buddhist (0.2%), Hindu (0.1%), Jewish (0%), Muslim (0.4%), Sikh (0.1%), other (0.4%).

There are an estimated 41,828 children and young people aged from 0 to 25 years living in Neath Port Talbot. More than 300 disabled children live in Neath Port Talbot and 731 children with educational statements attend our schools.



We have high levels of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, respiratory disorders and stroke in the county borough. 26.22% of the population is disabled (according to the Equality Act definition) compared to 19.1% across Wales. The numbers of adults registered as having a learning disability in Neath Port Talbot is 513, of which 314 live and are supported in the family home. Over 50% of carers are parents over 60 years of age with two thirds of this group being over the age of 70. Approximately 130 families in Neath Port Talbot use respite care.

Structure of the Council

Within Neath Port Talbot there are 42 electoral divisions returning 64 elected members and we operate a cabinet style of local government with a Leader who is supported by 8 cabinet members (the Executive). There are 5 Scrutiny Committees which scrutinise and monitor the performance and decisions of the Cabinet and make reports and recommendations which advise the Cabinet and the Council, as a whole, on its policies, budget and service delivery.

At an elected member level an executive member has responsibility for equalities, Equality Champion, whilst a further executive member has been designated as the Older Persons' Champion.

The importance given to equalities is reinforced by the fact that these policies and plans are amongst the limited number that require approval by full Council.

A senior management group consisting of the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors oversees the strategic management of the Council's business. Heads of Service have individual operational responsibility for services as well as providing strategic support to senior management.

4. Engagement and Employment

We continue to build on the engagement work we have undertaken over recent years in all aspects of our work; from the activities held in the development of our first set of equality objectives to the partnership event held during autumn 2014 as part of our budget setting process. These engagement activities have assisted us with the development of website self-service applications, the production of service specific public information as well as helping us to continue to improve our awareness of the issues, concerns and the needs of the diverse communities within the county borough.



Engagement has long been part of our approach particularly in relation to the equalities agenda. This revised Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives, as previously, were developed through the involvement of a number of equality groups as well as officers, elected members and partners.

In Neath Port Talbot we invested in developing networks with a number of local groups, i.e. the Disability Network Action Group, Black and Minority Ethnic Forum, Older Persons' Council, Youth Council and Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Forum, which help, support and engage with us on a range of matters. However, although recently reformed, the Black and Minority Ethnic Forum needs support to achieve its potential while significant organisational change is requiring a review of support for the Youth Council. We are committed to helping and supporting the development of these groups to ensure we are regularly obtaining a wide range of perspectives on the way in which we are discharging our equality duties.

Employment Data

Over recent years we have looked to develop a more integrated system for data collection in relation to staff. We had identified there was a gap in our ability to fully capture and report equalities statistics and to monitor the effectiveness of human resources policy in ensuring equality of opportunity and treatment. As a result we embarked on a process of reviewing and improving our human resources data collection systems. During the last year progress was mixed and we are reviewing our plans as we move into 2015-2016 to ensure we make the progress needed in this area of work.

Whilst we have not made the progress we had hoped, we have been able to capture a limited amount of data and have reported this employment information annually in accordance with our statutory responsibilities.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

We have made significant progress over recent years in our work on assessing the impact of our policies on residents and visitors to Neath Port Talbot. The increasingly difficult financial climate has necessitated a more concentrated approach to the assessment process and as such we have ensured that training has been arranged for elected members and officers in order to be more effective in this area of our work. We are committed to continuing training for relevant officers and elected members and intend to take a more targeted approach as we move forward, recognising the scale of organisational change that has taken place as a consequence of successive voluntary redundancy programmes.

We will audit the equality impact assessments carried out so far to identify good practice as well any weaknesses in the process. This will help inform the more focused training we intend to arrange for officers, and where appropriate elected members.



Additionally, the quality of the equality impact assessments we undertake will be kept under review and any issues identified will be addressed.

Arrangements for reporting the outcomes of the assessments to relevant Cabinet Boards have been employed whereby the equality impact assessments should go to members along with the report and that the conclusions and outcome of the equality impact assessments should be considered in full in the report.

While monitoring of the ongoing impact is recognised as an important part of the assessment process practice is varied. However, with the strengthening of our scrutiny arrangements we are confident of greater improvement in this area.

Equality impact assessments are published as part of the usual reporting arrangements for each relevant Cabinet Board.

6. Training and communication

Training is an important element of our work, not only in helping us meet our equality objectives but also as a key feature in the personal development of employees and elected members. As a result, our training programme has focused on areas that are new and those that remain challenging for the council as a whole.

We continue to work to ensure that all staff and elected members are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are suitably trained when to planning and delivering services. We acknowledge there are still gaps in our understanding of the diverse nature of our communities but training has been identified to address this.

As part of our work on community cohesion with the regional community cohesion coordinator a wide range of topics including disability hate crime, human trafficking, transgender and Gypsy Traveller & Roma awareness, have been arranged. Further training sessions have been identified for 2015-2016.

Our work on equality impact assessments has highlighted a continuing training requirement for all staff involved in the process. An audit of assessments already undertaken along with feedback from officers and members is scheduled to take place to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the current process which will in turn inform a training programme.

7. Our Equality Objectives

In reviewing our equality objectives we have been mindful of the various external pressures we continue to experience, information received as a result of engagement activities, generally and specifically in relation to the objectives, as well as planned work within



service areas over the coming years. As a result we have developed objectives that will not only allow us to focus our energies on those areas that matter most to people but also where we are certain that measurable outcomes will be delivered.

Additionally, we have identified similarities of purpose across our key plans and as such we are working toward providing a more rounded view of what we want to achieve both individually and in partnership. This plan is the first step towards a more cohesive identity for the work we will undertake to meet the needs, requirements and wherever possible the aspirations of our communities.

We are aware that through service improvements we enable people to achieve successful outcomes in their own lives. We remain particularly conscious of the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics, and;
- to take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

The revision of our equality objectives was made possible through the involvement of various groups representing/of people who share protected characteristics. The involvement of these groups is not just a feature of this specific exercise but is part of our budget planning and engagement activities. Using all the information gathered during the various events and conversations that took place, along with specific workshops we were able to focus on what was still relevant, what was missing, what we could do and what we could aspire to do in order to meet our commitment to:

“Creating a Neath Port Talbot where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous”



EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1

Address **harassment discrimination and other threats to personal safety** experienced by people due to their protected characteristics

Why is this important?

Hate crimes and incidents have a damaging and corrosive impact upon community cohesion, which can in turn increase community tensions and create a sense of intolerance. We along with our partners in the Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership recognise that under reporting of hate crime, and in particular disability hate crime, is prevalent within our communities.

We know that women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse. We want to continue our commitments to addressing this issue within the county borough and meet the proposed requirements of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act i.e. prevention of abuse, protection of victims and the support for those affected by such issues.

What difference do we want to make?

We want to improve people's safety, both real and perceived.

We want to help raise the confidence of communities in reporting hate incidents. We want to increase awareness of hate crime/incidents and reporting procedures amongst staff and the public.

We want to contribute towards the creation of an environment where domestic abuse is not tolerated and we want to protect and support victims and their families.

Links to other Plans:

Single Integrated Plan

Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan – Western Bay



EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2

Improve **access to information** by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

Why is this important?

We want to improve access to our public information, creating an easy to access catalogue of on-line information. We also want to promote awareness of alternative format information that the Council is able to offer, such as Braille, Large Print..

We want to ensure that public information is available in both Welsh and English and we want to ensure, where appropriate, that access to information in other languages can be facilitated

What difference do we want to make?

We want to offer more choice and availability of the way people access information and at lower cost.

Link to other Plans:

Corporate Improvement Plan

Single Integrated Plan



EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 3

Improve **access to services** by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

Why is this important?

The progress we made during the time Children's Social Services was under the serious concerns protocol resulted in that protocol being removed in April 2015. We ensure that the progress we made in strengthening and supporting the service to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people is continued. Clear priorities and services that respond to and meet the needs of local children and young people and families in need of help care and protection are essential.

The number of people with care and support needs due to age-related frailty or disability is increasing. The focus on how we assess people's needs and then provide services to meet those needs has been more around what the person cannot do rather than on what they can do. This does not achieve best outcomes for people because they can become more dependent on services, rather than living their lives independently in the community. This model of assessment is also too expensive. In a nutshell, increasing choice and control is critical to better outcomes for people and will enable us to meet increasing demands in a cost effective way.

What difference do we want to make?

We want to build on the foundations we have put in place and achieve our vision; 'All children and young people in Neath Port Talbot are protected and grow up in supportive families to achieve their potential'. We want to ensure that all children and young people who are looked after are provided with the best possible care and support in placements that meet their needs.

We want to continue to build on the success already achieved through the Transforming Adult Social Care programme, but it is not possible to continue to provide high levels of care and support to people which are not based on outcomes which maximise independence. We need to continue to reduce care home placements, and traditional forms of community support in order to live within the means available. We need to shift investment to early intervention and prevention (generally available through well-being services as primary prevention and targeted secondary prevention for people who already have care and support needs) from traditional service types.



Link to other plans:

Corporate Improvement Plan
Single Integrated Plan

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 4

Monitor **information and data** effectively in order to identify disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics

Why is this important?

In order to provide fair and equitable services we need to be fully aware of the needs of people from protected groups. We must be mindful of our roles and responsibilities both as individuals and as a council. We know some protected groups face significant barriers on a daily basis which can impact on their participation in the community life and when accessing services.

The impact of our policies and services on people's lives can be significant and we need to be aware of equality considerations when planning and delivering services, developing policies, when procuring services, and how we interact with people from protected groups

What difference do we want to make?

We want to be able to provide services and develop policies that are based on a robust understanding of the impact on people who have protected characteristics.

Link to other plans:

Corporate Improvement Plan
Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan – Western Bay



EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 5

Deliver **staff training** in line with the Equality Act requirements

Why is this important?

In order to provide fair and equitable services we need to be fully aware of the needs of people from protected groups. We must be mindful of our roles and responsibilities both as individuals and as a council. We know some protected groups face significant barriers on a daily basis which can impact on their participation in the community life and when accessing services.

The impact of our policies and services on people's lives can be significant and we need to be aware of equality considerations when planning and delivering services, developing policies, when procuring services, and how we interact with people from protected groups

What difference do we want to make?

We want staff to understand the Council's commitment to equalities. We want staff to be confident and competent to deliver services and design policies that recognise and provide for the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Link to other plans:

Corporate Improvement Plan
Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan – Western Bay
Single Integrated Plan



EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 6

Improve **access to the environment** by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

Why is this important?

To ensure that all members of our community can access our buildings and services, by removing physical and sensory barriers. This will include where possible, changes and adaptations to existing buildings and hard landscaping, and ensuring that all barriers are removed at the design stage on new projects.

What difference do we want to make?

We want to provide an environment where services can be accessed by all users with different needs and which satisfies the current British Standard design recommendations as a minimum.

Link to other plans:

Corporate Improvement Plan
Asset Management Plan
Strategic Schools Improvement Plan



Equality Objective 7

Reduce gaps in the **educational performance** experienced by pupils due to their protected characteristics

Why is this important?

In 2008, we approved an approach to school improvement, known as the Strategic School Improvement Programme based on the following principles:

1. standard of educational provision;
2. need for places and accessibility of schools;
3. standard and suitability of school accommodation; and
4. effective financial management.

We aim to raise standards in both school and pupil performance, and to secure continuous improvement in service delivery, so that all children and young people in Neath Port Talbot get the best start in life.

What difference do we want to make?

We aim to deliver an effective education service that enables all young people to maximise their learning potential. We want to continually improve the performance of schools and education of young people. We will empower all schools to become excellent and ensure high quality provision for all learners. These changes will improve the educational environment for pupils, staff and communities and will improve outcomes for children. We also want to continue to increase the levels of attendance in all our schools.

Links to other plans:

Strategic Schools Improvement Plan
Corporate Improvement Plan
Single Integrated Plan
Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan – Western Bay



Equality Objective 8

Ensure our **employment and recruitment processes** promote fairness and equality for all.

Why is this important?

It is important that our employment and recruitment processes promote fairness and equality for all and are based on the principle that people with protected characteristics (set out in the Equality Act 2010) should not be discriminated against in employment or when seeking employment.

We must demonstrate that we take any form of discrimination seriously and that we take reasonable steps as an employer to prevent discrimination. The policies need to communicate the standards of behaviour expected of all employees and what our employees can expect from the Council as an employer.

Our recruitment processes must give job applicants (both internal and external) the confidence that they will be treated with dignity and respect.

What difference do we want to make?

We want to encourage a diverse workforce and have a reputation for welcoming applicants with a protected characteristic in our organisation.

Links to other plans:

Single Integrated Plan
Corporate Improvement Plan



Gender Pay Objective

To further develop pay/employment data to better understand the reasons for the gender pay gap and to identify any actions which may be feasible to close the pay gap.

Why is this important?

We are mindful that while we have been successful in meeting the challenge in relation to equal pay amongst our staff we cannot rest on our laurels. We acknowledge that there is a long way to go in closing the gender pay gap completely but by keeping our pay and employment data under review we will be a better position to consider any actions that would be feasible to close that gap.



8.

Action Plan

Objective 1: Address harassment discrimination and other threats to personal safety experienced by people due to their protected characteristics		
Project 1: Increase awareness and reporting of hate crime.		
Responsible Officer: Karen Jones		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Design and deliver a programme of public engagement to prevent and raise awareness of hate crime and to increase the number of hate crimes reported to the police	Sian Morris	Ongoing
Review the outcomes of hate crime incident reporting and identify if steps can be taken to prevent such incidents or to provide more effective responses	Sian Morris	March 2016
Hate crime to be a standing item on agenda for each meeting of the equality groups we engage with in order to raise awareness and encourage reporting	Rhian Headon	October 2015

Measures

No. of hate crime reports

No. of repeat victims



Objective 1:	Address harassment discrimination and other threats to personal safety experienced by people due to their protected characteristics	
Project 2:	Strengthen partnership work to tackle domestic abuse and establish multi-agency mechanisms to support people at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime	
Responsible Officer: Karen Jones		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Continue to challenge the notion that domestic abuse is acceptable via a range of targeted communication campaigns, training events and conferences.	Julia Lewis	Ongoing
Manage the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Service (IDVA)	Julia Lewis	Ongoing
Support local partners in their continued roll out of education packs and projects in schools	Julia Lewis	Ongoing
Manage the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop and develop a business plan for its longer term future	Julia Lewis	March 2016
Create a county borough-wide domestic abuse strategy, incorporating into that strategy actions that will respond to the provisions within the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015	Julie Lewis	March 2016
Establish a local Channel Panel to discharge the Council's duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act.	Sian Morris	October 2015
Participate in the Regional CONTEST board	Karen Jones	Ongoing



Measures

No. of incidents of domestic abuse notified to partner agencies

No. of new victims of domestic abuse and serious sexual offences

No. of repeat victims notified to partner agencies

No. of high risk victims assessed

Percentage of domestic abuse crimes resulting in conviction

No. of people engaged with, trained and attended conferences

No. of referrals to the Channel Panel and associated outcomes

No. of service users accessing the One Stop Shop and related outcomes

Strategy adopted by agencies



Objective 2: Improve access to information by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people		
Project 1: To improve the Council's website content		
Responsible Officer: Karen Jones		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Implement a Digital by Choice policy	Karen Jones	October 2015
Complete work to bring website content up to date	Jonathan Lewis	March 2016
Ensure website is compliant with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme/Welsh Standards requirements	Jonathan Lewis	March 2016
With the assistance of the Disability Network Action Group, Youth Council, Older Persons' Council, Black and Minority Ethnic Forum, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender Forum embed user testing into website development activities	Steff Griffiths	Ongoing
Develop on-line catalogue of public information	Steff Griffiths	March 2016
Ensure web developments are "mobile device friendly"	Steve John	Ongoing
Establish the corporate consultation portal 'Objective' as a requirement for all public consultation exercises	Anita James	October 2015



Measures

No. of webpages updated

% of website pages fully bilingual

% of increase in first hit successes on website

% of customers rating the web content positively

SOCITM rating

% of public consultation exercises delivered through 'Objective'

No. of consultees using the corporate consultation portal

No. of customers assisted to use self-service options by Customer Services One Stop Shop staff

% of transactions completed on line where 'on line' is an option for customers



Objective 2:	Improve access to information by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people	
Project 2:	To increase the accessibility of information/documentation	
Responsible Officer:	Karen Jones	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Work with equality groups to review the guidelines on accessible information	Anita James and Steff Griffiths
	Promote the use of guidelines on accessible information	Anita James
	Secure improved compliance with the Council's Corporate Identity to ensure the appropriate format, font, etc., is used	Steff Griffiths
	Ensure inclusive and culturally appropriate language is used in public information documentation	Anita James
	Ensure Welsh language is considered and taken into account at the design and development stage of any public information/service area documentation	Anita James and Steff Griffiths
	Promote images of people with protected characteristics in public information provided by the Council	Steff Griffiths
	Achieved By	
		March 2016
		Ongoing
		March 2016
		March 2016
		Ongoing
		March 2016

Measures

No. of requests for public information in alternative formats

No. of "hits" on alternative format guidance pages

No. of complaints upheld in relation to use of culturally inappropriate/insensitive language

No. of complaints upheld in relation to compliance with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme



Objective 3: Improve access to services by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people		
Project: Improve access to the provision of Social Services		
Responsible Officer: Angela Thomas		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Analyse the profile of children on the child protection register and looked after children and the profile of existing foster carers to inform a recruitment and retention programme	Performance & Analysis Manager – Children’s Services	September 2016
Analyse profile of adults referred to social services for a service and those deemed eligible to receive services to inform future commissioning arrangements	Performance & Analysis Manager – Adult Services	September 2017
Analyse the profile of current service users to determine any gaps in the take up of services from specific groups.	Performance & Analysis Managers – Adult Services/Children’s Services	December 2016
Engage with specific groups to consider the possible existence of barriers to the take up services.	Head of Community Care and Commissioning/ Children’s Services	December 2016
Analyse the data to inform appropriate changes to services to meet the needs of identified groups	Head of Community Care and Commissioning/ Children’s Services	December 2016



Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Involve existing networks in developing information and advice in the implementation of the Social Care and Wellbeing Act	Head of Community Care and Commissioning/ Children's Services	March 2016

Measures

Equality profile of looked after children to be produced

Equality profile of foster carers to be produced

Equality profile of adult service users to be produced

Changes to equality profile made following actions



Objective 4:	Monitor information and data effectively in order to identify disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics	
Project:	Develop robust monitoring systems within services	
Responsible Officer:	Karen Jones	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Audit EIAs to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas for improvement • good practice • areas where further training is required 	Rhian Headon
	Use the lessons learnt from Equality Impact Assessment process, the budget planning event and other relevant engagement events to identify gaps in knowledge and/or understanding of the various protected characteristics.	Rhian Headon
	Undertake development work with existing groups to put them on a firmer footing, e.g. Black and Minority Ethnic Forum and Disability Network Action Group	Rhian Headon
	Ensure monitoring data on staff is collected, inputted and updated via the VISION system at regular periods during staff employment with the Council e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • joining the council • change of position within the council 	Sheenagh Rees
	Provide guidance and advice to officers in providing feedback to consultation exercises	Rhian Headon
	Feedback on consultation exercise to be available through Objective	Rhian Headon and Anita James
		Achieved By
		October 2015
		October 2015
		Ongoing
		March 2017
		March 2016
		March 2016

Measures

% of equality impact assessments audited

No. of improvement actions identified from equality impact assessment audit

% of improvement actions completed

No. of people participating in Black and Minority Ethnic Forum and Disability Network Action Group



Objective 5: Deliver staff training in line with the Equality Act requirements		
Project 1: Review staff training in line with the Equality Act Requirements		
Responsible Officer: Lynne Doyle		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
To deliver training sessions on a range of specific topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Essential skills. - Dyslexia awareness - Hate Crime - Disability Awareness - Human trafficking. - PREVENT anti-extremism awareness - Transgender awareness - Equality Impact Assessments - Equality Act Responsibilities - Sexual Exploitation - Roma Awareness - Gypsy and Traveller Awareness - Dementia Awareness - Cultural Awareness - Age Discrimination 	Lynne Doyle	2015-16 November 2015 2015-16 January 2016 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 2015-16 October 2015 October 2015 2015-16 2015-16

Measures

No. of staff attending training on each specific topics

% of participants of training sessions that considered training had met the objectives set for the programme



Objective 6:	Improve access to the environment by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people	
Project 1:	Improve physical accessibility to and within civic offices and other council owned buildings	
Responsible Officer:	Mike Roberts	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Review signage within civic offices and other council owned buildings in accordance with BS8300, RNIB	Richard Jenkins
	Renew as appropriate signage within civic buildings	Richard Jenkins
	Review access to and from civic offices and amend where appropriate	Richard Jenkins
	Establish a system for keeping access to council owned buildings under review and amend where appropriate	Richard Jenkins
	Ensure access is suitable for the public to use toilets where appropriate in civic offices	Richard Jenkins
	Sensory accessibility within civic offices and other council owned buildings to be reviewed	Richard Jenkins
	Liaise with the Sensory Support Manager and other partners regarding specific issues for people with visual and hearing impairments.	Richard Jenkins
	Improve entrance signage to Neath Civic Centre	Richard Jenkins
	Create a disabled toilet near the committee rooms in Port Talbot Civic Centre	Richard Jenkins
	Continue to undertake access audits of Council buildings and prioritise identified works to improve accessible environment	Richard Jenkins
	Achieved By	
		February 2016
		February 2016
		February 2016
		Ongoing 2015
		October 2015
		Ongoing
		Ongoing
		November 2015
		September 2015
		Ongoing

Measures

No. of complaints received in relation to accessibility
 % of complaints upheld in relation to accessibility



Objective 6:	Improve access to the environment by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people	
Project 2a:	Appropriate positioning of street furniture, signs, lighting columns, etc	
Responsible Officer:	Mike Roberts	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Engage with Disability Network Action Group Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership and other relevant groups to consider appropriate repositioning of street lighting columns as part of the street lighting refurbishment scheme	Mike Key
	Engage with Disability Network Action Group, Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership and other relevant groups where appropriate to consider access improvements as part of any significant environmental maintenance work	Andrew Lewis
	Ensure play equipment at the new school development at Western Avenue is appropriate for children with a physical disability	Andrew Lewis
	Ensure replacement benches within parks are suitable for people with a physical disability	Andrew Lewis
	Continue to ensure that bus shelters are suitable for all users	Andrew Lewis
	Continue to share and promote best practice in relation to equality within our service areas	Andrew Lewis
		Achieved By
		September 2016
		Ongoing
		January 2016
		Ongoing
		Ongoing
		Ongoing

Measures

No. of compliments received regarding accessibility

% of complaints upheld in relation to accessibility



Objective 6:	Improve access to the environment by meeting the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people	
Project 2b:	Design and delivery of regeneration projects	
Responsible Officer:	Mike Roberts	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Engage with stakeholder groups, including those representing people from protected groups, to inform the design and delivery of regeneration projects	Achieved By
	The positioning and style of street furniture to be considered in the following regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Station Road Enhancements • Green Park Riverside Enhancements • Harbour Walk • Port Talbot Integrated Transport Hub • Neath Town Centre Redevelopment – Phase 1 	Ian Williams September 2015 June 2016 March 2016 December 2016 November 2015
	With relevant groups determine the appropriate signage, etc. in the following regeneration projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Station Road Enhancements • Green Park Riverside Enhancements • Harbour Walk • Port Talbot Integrated Transport Hub • Neath Town Centre Redevelopment – Phase 1 	Ian Williams September 015 June 2016 March 2016 December 2016 November 2015



Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
<p>Ensure access is suitable for the public to use the facilities particularly in the following regeneration projects are to be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Station Road Enhancements • Green Park Riverside Enhancements • Harbour Walk • Port Talbot Integrated Transport Hub • Neath Town Centre Redevelopment – Phase 1 	Ian Williams	<p>September 2015 June 2016 March 2016 December 2016 November 2015</p>
<p>Liaise with architects and other partners regarding specific issues for people with mobility problems in the following regeneration projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Station Road Enhancements • Green Park Riverside Enhancements • Harbour Walk • Port Talbot Integrated Transport Hub • Neath Town Centre Redevelopment– Phase 1 	Ian Williams	<p>September 2015 June 2016 March 2016 December 2016 November 2015</p>

Measures

No. of complaints received regarding accessibility
 % of complaints upheld in relation to accessibility



Objective 7: Reduce gaps in the educational performance experienced by pupils due to their protected characteristics		
Project 1: To raise levels of attendance of pupils with the protected characteristics at school		
Responsible Officer: Chris Millis		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved By
Attendance officers to support schools in order to collate data on protected characteristics	Huw Roberts	Ongoing
Data unit to provide monthly attendance information to identify trends on pupils within identified groups	Carl Glover	Ongoing
Education Welfare Service to evaluate data to assist schools in developing a strategy of engagement as part of their attendance action plan to be submitted annually (September) in accordance with the attendance partnership agreement	Huw Roberts	Ongoing
Analyse the attendance information in relation to identified groups and inform relevant officers in order to develop engagement strategies with identified pupils	Huw Roberts	Ongoing

Measures

To reduce the difference of 0.1% between boys and girls at primary level and at maintain the equal status at secondary level.

To reduce the difference of 1.5% between pupils with SEN and other pupils at primary level and 2.6% at secondary level (Pupils with SEN are more likely to have a disability than pupils not classed as SEN).

To maintain the equality of attendance between pupils classed as White British and Non White British at primary level and maintain high level at secondary level – 1.6% above White British.

To reduce the difference of 4% between travellers and non travellers at primary level and maintain the high percentage at secondary (4.7% above non travellers).



Objective 7: Reduce gaps in the educational performance experienced by pupils due to their protected characteristics		
Project 2: To reduce the gaps in educational performance attainment between boys and girls at Key Stages (KS) 1, 2 & 3		
Responsible Officer: Chris Millis		
Action	Lead Officer	Achieved by
To address areas of teaching and learning to ensure curriculum is engaging and challenging for both boys and girls.	EDIS Challenge Advisors	Ongoing
Training for all school staff to ensure good models of Teaching and Learning are consistent within our schools for literacy and numeracy.	Teacher Development Officers for Literacy/ Numeracy	Ongoing
Training for school staff to ensure good models of Teaching and Learning are consistent within our schools for addressing SEN/ALN	Teacher Development Officer for ALN	Ongoing
Identify good practice where schools are displaying consistently strong evidence in relation to attainment by boys.	EDIS Challenge Advisors	Ongoing
Share good practice by the development of Hwb	EDIS Challenge Advisors	Ongoing
Updated training for Headteachers to undertake effective monitoring of groups of pupils to ensure appropriate progress is made based on previous achievement	Mike Daley	Ongoing
All Heads and Deputy Heads to receive updated training on data analysis, Self-evaluation development and School improvement plan in relation to attainment of underachievement of identified pupils	Mike Daley	Ongoing
Updated Training with INCERTS tracking software for Heads, Deputies and Assessment coordinators with a focus on underachievement of either Girls and/ or Boys in relation to tracking groups	Mike Daley / Ann Stoker	Ongoing



Measures

A comprehensive regional training program is available to all schools for literacy and numeracy. Regular training programs for ALN, particularly update sessions for coordinators.

School to school support being developed in every school via the menu of support decided in the Autumn Core Visit. This is bespoke for each school and is supplemented by the 'Lift as you climb' project at primary level.

There is now individual tracking data within the LA for every pupil which includes teacher assessment, test scores and contextual data over time. This is collated by the data unit and shared with all schools.

Extensive training for all senior leaders (including governors) in self-evaluation and improvement planning has been delivered. Templates for both reports have also been provided to each school.

Extensive Hwb training for all schools in the authority has been provided.



Objective 8:	Ensure our employment and recruitment processes promote fairness and equality for all.	
Responsible Officer:	Sheenagh Rees	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Employment Policies	Achieved by
	Review our employment policies every three years:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure • Grievance Policy and Procedure • Domestic Violence Policy • Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy • Flexible Working Policy 	Diane Hopkins October 2015 June 2016 September 2016 November 2016 September 2017
	Recruitment Processes	
	Undertake training for recruiting managers outlining their responsibilities under the Equality Act, making reasonable adjustments, at interview and when considering the best applicant for the post, ensuring a fair and transparent process	Diane Hopkins Ongoing
	Workforce Monitoring Information	
	Collection of information on protected characteristics (This is part of the VISION Development Project and approval needs to be given for this development to be prioritised by Efficiency Board).	Cath Lewis March 2016
	Annual Reporting	
	Publish annual report on employment information by protected characteristic. (see above)	Cath Lewis September 2015



Action	Lead Officer	Achieved by
Trade Union Consultation		
Undertake ongoing consultation on monitoring developments and future objectives. These are to be on the agenda annually for the LGS Forum.	Diane Hopkins	April 2016

Measures

No. of staff attending recruitment training

% of participants of training sessions that considered their knowledge had increased

No. of recruitment complaints

Other measures are reported in the Annual Equalities Employment Information Report. (LINK)



Objective:	Gender Pay Objective	
Project:	To further develop pay/employment data to better understand the reasons for the gender pay gap and to identify any actions which may be feasible to close the pay gap.	
Responsible Officer:	Sheenagh Rees	
	Action	Lead Officer
	Further develop pay/employment data	
	Address existing discrepancies	Cath Lewis
	Identify and address any gaps in data	Cath Lewis
	Annual Reporting	
	Draft and publish pay gap information in employment information annual report	Diane Hopkins
	Starting Salaries	
	Policy decision that all new starters commence on the minimum point of the grade. This is monitored via the Starting Salaries Monitoring Form.	Diane Hopkins
		Ongoing

Measures

Measure the gender pay gap by using the following method:-

- The single figure difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women calculated by reference to all female employees' average pay with all male employees' average pay. No. of new starters commencing above the minimum point of the grade.

