

# NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

### ANNUAL REPORT

Assessment of our performance 2015-2016



If you require this information in larger print or in an alternative format, please contact the Corporate Strategy Team on 01639 763242 or email: [corporate.strategy@npt.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.strategy@npt.gov.uk)

This document is also available in Welsh

## Contents

Section 1 – Equality Legislation .....	2
Section 2 – Revision of the Strategic Equality Plan .....	3
Section 3 - Progress made against each of our Equality Objectives .....	4
Section 4 – Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty and Specific Duties .....	38
Section 5 – Have your Say .....	43

## **Section 1 – Equality Legislation**

### **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 Equality 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.

This Annual Report is prepared under Section 16(1) of The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

## **Section 2 - Review of the Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives**

Work to revise our Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives commenced during 2014-2015 with the understanding that we were not in the same place as we were in 2011-2012, when the original Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives were produced.

Through active engagement and working closely with our elected members, officers and local equality groups we identified that while our objectives were still relevant, the actions to meet each one required amendment to reflect progress made to date, the changing needs of people who share protected characteristics, the work that was already being undertaken as well as the challenging financial climate.

The revised Strategic Equality Plan, including revised equality objectives, was subject to a period of public consultation during summer 2015 with responses received from individuals, the Older Persons' Council and the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner. A number of comments and actions were suggested which were incorporated where appropriate. Where this was not possible we are confident that the comments/concerns are being addressed through the Council's various strategies and plans, e.g. the Corporate Improvement Plan, or by offering alternative ways to counter concerns, e.g. meetings between various officers and the Older Persons' Council to highlight work that is being undertaken in these areas.

Following consultation amendments were made to the Strategic Equality Plan with the inclusion of additional actions under some objectives, and the revised Strategic Equality Plan was agreed by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board on 3 September 2015, and approved by Council on 14 October 2015.

The Strategic Equality Plan acknowledges that we are working through large scale changes in order to respond to the continuing climate of austerity. The emphasis placed on further improvements to equality impact assessments, public information and engagement is part of our response to the financial challenges that we face and is focused on working hard to understand the potential consequences of service cuts, reductions and changes, especially on groups who share a protected characteristic.

## **Section 3 - Progress made against each of our Equality Objectives**

## **Equality Objective 1 - Address harassment, discrimination and other threats to personal safety experienced by people due to their protected characteristics**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

A number of training sessions have been held during the period which have led to an increased understanding and awareness of incidents, recognition and consequences of hate crime. Along with local partners, we supported Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2015 where a multi-agency group developed calendar events which were held across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

Working with the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator we have begun to develop an action plan to progress our work on tackling hate crime. It is anticipated that the action plan will be finalised by the end of March 2017.

South Wales Police have reviewed the procedure of hate crime incident reporting and have made changes to the way they record and respond to incidents. These arrangements will ensure that the needs of the individual are met and are monitored in the form of an individual action plan. During the year there have also been changes to the definitions of 'repeat victim' and 'repeat offender' resulting in the reporting period changing from a 3 to 12 month period.

Over the year here has been an increase of reported instances of domestic violence, a 29.6% increase on 2014-2015. This has been reflected in an increase in the number of referrals of high risk victims to Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA); increased from 265 in 2014-2015 to 344 in 2015-2016 and an increase in referrals to the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) from 336 in 2014-2015 to 370 in 2015- 2016.

We have continued to work with partners on a range of activities including White Ribbon Week, engagement and training events with the public and various groups and Crucial Crew with Year 6 pupils. We have supported the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop which offers advice, information and support from specialist workers to help anybody who is, or has been, affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence. The Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop received 72 referrals during the period July 2015 to March 2016.

## 1. Increase awareness and reporting of hate crime

### During 2015-2016 we said we would:

- 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.
- 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
- Hate crime to be a standing item on the agendas for each meeting of the equality groups we engage with in order to raise awareness and encourage reporting

### What did we do?

- The Community Safety Team is setting up a Local Action Group to design and deliver an action plan to ensure a consistent message is delivered across Neath Port Talbot. This will ensure that a high standard of training is delivered and will encourage the reporting of hate crime incidents.
- Since October 2015 the Community Safety Team held 64 engagement days reaching over 11,500 members of the public. Some of these events were specifically delivering anti-hate crime messages, with information and advice for victims also available at events.
- Anti-hate crime messages have been delivered through social media with one message reaching over 1,000 members of the public.
- Four training sessions took place during the period with 68 members of NPT staff being trained.
- Along with local partners we supported Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2015, where a multi-agency group developed calendar events were held across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.
- South Wales Police have reviewed the procedure of hate crime incident reporting and have made changes to the way they record and respond to incidents. These arrangements ensure that the needs of the individual are met and are monitored in the form of an individual action plan.
- During 2015-2016 there were 102 recorded incidents of hate crime, with increases recorded across all strands;

disability, race, religion, sexual orientation and transgender.

- Hate crime has been part of the wider discussions at a number of BME Forum meetings that have been held during the period.
- It is anticipated that part of the role of the proposed post of community development worker to support the BME Forum, will be to promote community cohesion amongst and between local communities.

## **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**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- Continue to challenge the notion that domestic abuse is acceptable via a range of targeted communication campaigns, training events and conferences.
- Manage the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Service (IDVA).
- Support local partners in their continued roll out of education packs and projects in schools.
- Manage the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop and develop a business plan for its longer term future.
- 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 (VAWDASV) (Wales) Act 2015.
- Establish a local Channel Panel to discharge the Council's duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act.
- Participate in the Regional CONTEST board.



## What did we do?

- The Community Safety Team held 64 engagement days reaching over 11,500 members of the public. Some of these events were specifically delivering Domestic Abuse messages but information and advice for victims was available at all the events
- Domestic Abuse messages are delivered through social media and the Safer Neath Port Talbot White Ribbon campaign and the 'Speak Out' initiative in October 2015 reached over 5,500 members of the public.
- A training programme, in line with the Welsh Government National Training Framework, is being planned by our training department and the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator.
- During 2015-2016 the MARAC heard 370 'very high' and 'high' risk domestic violence cases, a 20.9% increase from the previous year. However, the number of repeat cases discussed has reduced by around 3.5% in the same period with a steady increase in referrals from partner agencies, which is seen by Safe Lives as a sign of a strong (MARAC) and good partnership working arrangements.
- In 2015-2016 there were 1.6 FTE Independent Domestic Violence Advisors based in the Community Safety team working with high risk domestic abuse cases; increase in the number of referrals from 265 in 2014-2015 to 344 in 2015-2016.
- The Community Safety team continues to work with partners in schools and on specific events. For example the Crucial Crew event allowed the team to convey an important message to around 1,600 year 6 pupils in 2015 regarding the importance of Healthy Relationships.
- Various public engagement events held during White Ribbon Week enabled the team to engage with over 700 people at various events and White Ribbon related Facebook posts were viewed 9,000 times.
- An independent consultant completed a review of the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop and the action plan is monitored by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Group. A One Stop Shop Development Manager has been in post since July 2015.
- An independent review of the domestic abuse service in Neath Port Talbot has been undertaken and from this review a local strategy will be developed in partnership with ABMU and an action plan will be implemented.

- The domestic abuse review was delayed but is now underway; it is being carried out by an independent consultant and is due to be completed by the end of May 2016. The results and recommendations of the review will provide the basis for the local Domestic Abuse strategy required by the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 and the restructure of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Group (DASG) The review will identify gaps in the local service, identify how much is spent on the service and establish if the needs of the victim are being met.
- The Neath Port Talbot Channel Panel has been set up in line with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Chair of the Panel has been identified and the Panel will be meeting for the first time during the summer. All Panel members have received the Home Office approved WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) 3 training. This training will be rolled out to staff and partners in Neath Port Talbot
- The Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services has chaired the CONTEST Board for nine months. Key developments over this period are:
  - regional chairs to be members of the National CONTEST Board to ensure there are clear lines of communication between the regional and national structure;
  - strengthened processes for sharing intelligence & agreeing actions to respond to intelligence;
  - completion of an assessment of compliance with new duties & responsibilities set out in the Counter-terrorism & Security Act 2015;
  - stronger links between local Channel Panels and the regional board; and
  - stronger links between the regional board, community safety partnership and safeguarding arrangements.
- Changes to the definitions of ‘repeat victim’ and ‘repeat offender’ have taken place during the period and have consequently resulted in changes to the reporting period, from 3 to 12 month period.
- During 2015-16 there was an increase in violence against the person officers with 39.3% of these were domestic related. This was an increase of 29.6% on the period 2014-2015.
- During 2015-16 refuges in Neath Port Talbot provided temporary accommodation to 173 women and 103 dependent children there have been 877 people over 16years of age accessing services provide by Calan DVS, Port Talbot & Afan Women’s Aid and Hafan Cymru agencies.

## **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**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

We adopted the Digital by Choice Strategy in November 2015. This Strategy aims to ensure that citizens access the channel most appropriate to their needs and to significantly extend the range of services available on-line and to increase citizen uptake of the on-line options.

Our overall SOCITM website rating improved from one star to a two star as at 31 March 2016 but was below our target of a 3 star rating for the year. SOCITM is a society for IT specialists in the public sector.

As part of our work to improve the content and information available on our website we have removed approximately 1200 outdated webpages, updated the remaining 1800 pages as well as ensuring they are available in Welsh.

As at 31 March 2016, 88% of our webpages are available in Welsh, with a further 9% with external translators awaiting translation. This is a significant improvement given that only 39% of our webpages were fully bilingual in August 2014.

We have developed a Performance Hub on our intranet which holds information and guidance on Performance Management, Business Planning, Risk, Governance, Equalities and Programme and Project Management. The Equalities pages in the Hub contain information and support materials to assist staff in relation to equalities and the Welsh Language Standards

## 1. To improve the Council's website content

### During 2015-2016 we said we would:

- Implement a Digital by Choice policy
- Complete work to bring website content up to date
- Ensure website is compliant with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme/Welsh Standards requirements
- 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
- Develop on-line catalogue of public information
- Ensure web developments are "mobile device friendly"
- Establish the corporate consultation portal 'Objective' as a requirement for all public consultation exercises

### What did we do?

- The Channel Shift Strategy 'Digital by Choice' was adopted by Council on 25 November 2015. The Strategy aims to ensure that citizens access the channel most appropriate to their needs and to significantly extend the range of services available on-line and to increase citizen uptake of the on-line options.
- The Welsh Government launched a Digital Inclusion Charter in February 2016 which helps organisations show how they are helping digitally excluded people, particularly older people, people with disabilities, unemployed people, social housing tenants and families in poverty, enjoy the benefits of the internet. We are working with other local organisations to sign up to the Charter to help reinforce our work in this area and also promote the importance of helping more people get online, amongst partners and the wider community.
- As at 31 March 2016, 88% of our webpages are available in Welsh, with a further 9% with external translators awaiting translation. This is a significant improvement given that only 39% of our webpages were fully bilingual in August 2014.

- A Public Information Catalogue has been developed and populated. A trial system has been set up and is being tested and will move to a live site during the summer of 2016
- Our website has been redesigned and the new look website now has full functionality so can be accessed through all mobile devices without losing the overall look of the website.
- We continued to work on improving the content of our website, bringing it up to date, making it easier to use (e.g. access via mobile devices). 91% of our website customers said that they were very satisfied/satisfied or found our website 'OK' in terms of the general look and feel of improvements made to services available on-line. 83% of our website customers said they were very satisfied/satisfied or found our website 'Ok' in terms of ease of getting around our site. 78% of our website customers said that they were very satisfied/satisfied or found our website 'OK' in terms of ease of finding information and services.
- Our overall SOCITM website rating as at 31March 2016 was 2 star, which was below our target for the year of a 3 star rating. Further improvements to our website during 2016-2017 should see an increase in our next star rating which is due in March 2017.
- The number of transactions brought online during the year increased from almost 19,000 in 2014-2015 to 32,000 transactions during 2015-2016. This increase has been achieved by the redesign of our website, making it easier for the public to access online services, increasing the number of services available online and by increasing marketing and advertising of our online services.
- More customers accessed digital channels to complete transactions such as ordering recycling equipment or requesting van permits. Online take up significantly increased from 39% in 2014-2015 to 57% in 2015-2016 (for those services that are fully online).
- We continue to promote the use of our online public consultation portal, 'Objective', across all service areas via our usual communication channels, e.g. the staff newsletter, staff briefings, the intranet, etc. 'Objective' has been used across all service areas and remains the main consultation mechanism for the Local Development Plan.

## **2. To increase the accessibility of information/documentation**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- Work with equality groups to review the guidelines on accessible information
- Promote the use of guidelines on accessible information
- Secure improved compliance with the Council's Corporate Identity to ensure the appropriate format, font, etc., is used
- Ensure inclusive and culturally appropriate language is used in public information documentation
- Ensure Welsh language is considered and taken into account at the design and development stage of any public information/service area documentation
- Promote images of people with protected characteristics in public information provided by the Council

### **What did we do?**

- Our internal 'How to...' guides, primarily in relation to accessibility, were updated in January 2016 using feedback provided by local equality groups during previous meetings, consultations and informal discussions as well as desktop research to identify good practice from other organisations.
- During 2015-2016 we were not able to make as much progress as anticipated in updating the 'How to...' guides. However, the guides will be reviewed and updated over the next year to reflect any developments in the specific topics, the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards that have been applied to us and to promote inclusivity, through language and images, as well as the use of more positive images of people with protected characteristics.
- The 'How to...' guide topics range from booking a photographer to organising a meeting and producing accessible documentation to setting up a social media site and we continue to promote the guides via our internal communication mechanisms e.g. 'In the Loop' staff magazine, Intranet staff news, etc.
- Guidance for staff in relation to the completion of Equality Impact Assessments and other related equalities materials and the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, is available on the Performance Hub on our intranet. Since going live at the end of October 2015 there have been 5,207 hits on the Hub with 404 hits on the

equalities pages.

- Corporate letterhead templates have been developed and circulated to relevant officers to ensure consistency across the Council. The templates also include standard text in relation to the Welsh language in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards that have been applied to us.

## **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**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

Analysis to inform services in relation to determine any gaps in service take-up and addressing any appropriate changes to services is on-going; an internal group has been re-established to ensure identified issues are communicated and acted upon appropriately.

The development of our monitoring and recording systems is linked with the All-Wales Community Care Information Systems which is standardising I.T. and recording systems across Wales; this system will incorporate the requirements of collecting data for the protected groups. There is a phased rollout of the system; we are awaiting confirmation of implementation.

Participation and Engagement Officer within Children's Services and the Planning and Engagement Officer, Adult Services have been vacant in recent months; appointment to these posts will shortly be undertaken and assist in engaging with specific groups.



## **Improve access to the provision of Social Services**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- 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
- Analyse profile of adults referred to social services for a service and those deemed eligible to receive services to inform future commissioning arrangements
- Analyse the profile of current service users to determine any gaps in the take up of services from specific groups.
- Engage with specific groups to consider the possible existence of barriers to the take up services.
- Analyse the data to inform appropriate changes to services to meet the needs of identified groups
- Involve existing networks in developing information and advice in the implementation of the Social Care and Wellbeing Act

### **What did we do?**

- The Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy has recently been approved by Children Young People and Education Committee and is now in the process of being implemented. The Strategy was informed by the profiles of looked after children and foster carers.
- We aimed to recruit 14 new foster carers, we actually approved 17 fostering households
- Under our existing monitoring system we collect data on six of the nine protected groups. We are working to ensure that all our IT systems are able to capture this data and so be able to include this information in all relevant reports.
- The development of our monitoring and recording systems is linked with the All-Wales Community Care Information Systems which is standardising I.T. and recording systems across Wales; this system will

incorporate the requirements of collecting data for the protected groups. There is a phased rollout of the system; NPT is awaiting confirmation of implementation. When in place, this will contribute to our better understanding of our service users' needs and requirements.

- Our promotional material currently encourages recruitment of foster carers from a wide range of groups. However, following the analysis of the profiles of service users all promotional material will be reviewed to ensure it is suitable, relevant and inclusive; marketing material is already being reviewed in line with the new Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- A multi-agency group has been established to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. A development plan is in place to develop a trusted and accessible community resources directory which is also supported by a communications and engagement plan. An options appraisal on available software platforms on the way forward will be put before members in autumn 2016

## **Equality Objective 4 - Monitor information and data effectively in order to identify disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

We have made good progress with undertaking Equality Impact Assessments as part of policy and service development. By undertaking an audit of sample of equality impact assessments we have been able to concentrate the ongoing development of the process to reflect the recommendations of the Equality Impact Assessments audit, undertaken in October 2015.

Supporting the development and sustainability of the BME Forum was one of our key actions for the period. Working with the Forum and Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service we have been able to reach the position where the post of a development worker was advertised during the summer 2016 with the successful candidate starting in October 2016.

We have not been able to make as much progress as we would have liked in monitoring staff data. However, the range of information collected does not include all of the protected characteristics and to address this would require a work intensive exercise at a time when resources are reducing within the Human Resources team and across the Council.

## **Develop robust monitoring systems within services**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- Audit Equality Impact Assessments to identify:
  - areas for improvement
  - good practice
  - areas where further training is required
- 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.
- 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
- 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.:
  - joining the Council
  - change of position within the Council
- Provide guidance and advice to officers in providing feedback to consultation exercises
- Feedback on consultation exercise to be available through Objective

### **What did we do?**

- An audit was undertaken on 24 completed Equality Impact Assessments. The audit report, produced in October 2015, identified areas for improvement, good practice and areas where further training was required. Out of the seven recommendations, which included improvements to data collection, more focussed training, revision of the assessment form and associated guidance as well as consideration of increased scrutiny arrangements; we have met three, with work continuing to meet the remaining four.
- Although there has been a delay in fully identifying gaps in knowledge and/or understanding of the various

protected characteristics we have been able to make some improvements to our data collection systems, as well as ensuring service areas are more aware of the various local equality groups who are able to provide assistance.

- Work is ongoing to revise the Equality Impact Assessment forms and associated guidance taking into account other relevant work, e.g. the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and this will be completed during 2016-2017.
- We have been working with the Black and Minority Ethnic Forum and Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service to identify support requirements and progress the position of the development worker to help support and develop Forum. A development worker post was identified as an appropriate support and so a recruitment process was begun with an appointment made in October 2016.
- Although the arrangements have been in place for a number of years to obtain 'equalities' data at the point of recruitment (both new to the Council and internal appointments), the range of information however does not include all of the protected characteristics. To address this requires a work intensive exercise at a time when resources are reducing within the HR team and across the Council.
- A possible solution has been identified, i.e. all employees to update their individual records through the Employee Portal. This is currently being scoped for consideration by our Digital by Choice Programme Board.
- Service areas have been supported in undertaking consultation exercises; on the questions, the style and layout, legislative requirements as well as who to consult. Feedback is an important part of the consultation process and as such officers are advised of this.
- Additionally, advice on providing feedback to consultations will be included in the revised Equality Impact Assessment guidance. With the review of our consultation mechanisms currently underway we have a further opportunity to include advice on providing feedback.

## **Equality Objective 5 - Deliver staff training in line with the Equality Act requirements**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

During the year budget reductions have impacted greatly on our ability to deliver corporate training sessions. It has been necessary to reduce the number and range of subjects we have been able to offer corporately. However, we have endeavoured to continue to deliver equalities themed training wherever possible by either in partnership with other councils and organisations or by accessing other budget streams.

Working with the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator a number of courses have been delivered to raise awareness of the hate crime; sessions are planned for 2016-2017 too.

Building on previous years' training and taking into account the recommendations in the Equality Impact Assessment audit that was undertaken during the period, we provided more tailored training for managers who would be responsible for undertaking the more contentious assessments. Additionally, more specific training sessions were provided where required.

Over recent years we have become acutely aware of the rise in dementia within the population and as such have developed practices and training sessions to help provide appropriate services to those who have this condition within our local population. We have developed training in this area to help our staff have greater awareness of dementia and its effects and to help them provide a better service, 200 social services staff have attended the 'Introduction to Rethinking Dementia' awareness sessions during 2015-2016 with the sessions seen as a key training course for all social service frontline staff.

## **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

Review staff training in line with the Equality Act Requirements

- To deliver training sessions on a range of specific topics

What did we do?

- There was no funding during 2015-2016 to enable essential skills training sessions to be offered to all staff. However, we are working with Workers' Education Association and Connecting Learners under Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF) Project funding to provide sessions for Community Care staff.
- 44 staff attended Dyslexia awareness training session during the year; the majority from Social Services areas as well as six staff from Hillside Secure Unit and three foster carers.
- 67 staff attended Hate Crime Awareness sessions during 2015-2016. Sessions were also attended by other organisations including NPT Homes, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Calan DVS.
- 18 staff attended two Human Trafficking/Anti-Slavery awareness sessions last year with five further sessions planned for 2016-2017. There was a good response from attendees who all felt that the training was very worthwhile and informative especially as to the different types of trafficking and would highly recommend the training. Teaching staff attending the sessions were keen for further information on ways and tools to encourage victims to come forward as well as more information and resources on awareness training for pupils
- 46 Child Sexual Exploitation awareness sessions were delivered across Western Bay with 195 Neath Port Talbot staff attending in 2015-2016. Training is again scheduled for 2016-2017 with 52 staff already booked on sessions.
- During the period, nine staff attended Roma Awareness sessions which were held in partnership with the City and County of Swansea.
- We were able to provide one Gypsy and Traveller Awareness training session, in October 2015, which was attended by 16 staff members.
- A 'Safeguarding Values and Attitudes' course was delivered to 26 foster carers during the period.

- Train the Trainer sessions for delivering WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training have been completed and WRAP training sessions are being planned for all frontline staff during 2017.
- Training sessions were held for those staff responsible for completing Equality Impact Assessments, particularly in relation to budget proposals. In addition to these general training sessions, more tailored sessions have been provided as well as one to one specific training for staff where required. Future training is being considered in light of the audit report recommendations.
- In December 2015 16 elected members attended a session which provided an overview of the Equality Act 2010 with a particular focus on Equality Impact Assessments and considered the audit undertaken of completed Equality Impact Assessments as well as exploring areas of good practice/areas of improvement and the elected members' role in leading on their development.
- The Heads of Service Equality and Community Cohesion Group have ensured that staff are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 through a range of activities; training sessions, briefing sessions, articles in the staff newsletter. In addition, support materials have been uploaded to our Performance Hub to assist staff, including material to assist with undertaking assessments.
- We held an engagement event in June 2015 for six elected member equality champions as part of the wider engagement process undertaken for the revision of our equality objectives and the review of our Strategic Equality Plan.
- We are acutely aware of the increases in people living with dementia and the increasing demands this may place on services. As a result we have developed and provided Introduction to dementia awareness sessions for 99 staff during the period. Our Health and Well-being Group are planning to hold Dementia Friends Information Sessions during 2016-2017. This training will be provided by two members of our training team who will be attending Dementia Champions training course in order to provide this training.
- Due to the reduction to our training budget we have not been able to make progress in providing cultural awareness or specific age discrimination training during the year, although age awareness is included in the more general Equality Act training. We will consider how best to meet our commitments to providing cultural awareness during 2016-2017.



## **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**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

Work has been ongoing to improve the physical accessibility of civic offices and council owned buildings. However, further review of signage has been delayed until receipt of the Welsh Language Commissioner's determination on the Council's challenge to 55 of the Welsh Language Standards, which includes the standard relating to signage.

We have continued with our regeneration work across the county borough, with projects such as the new multi storey car park and retail space in Neath Town Centre, Aberavon's new £13.4m Leisure and Fitness Centre and the redevelopment of Port Talbot Parkway Station and Harbour Walk.

We have been successful in securing funding for and with our partners have made significant progress on 12 regeneration projects as part of the 'Vibrant and Viable Places' framework. With the involvement of the Disability Network Action Group (DNAG) and other stakeholders we have been able to realise improvements to the physical accessibility of the area particularly with the redevelopment of the Port Talbot Parkway Station and Harbour Walk.

## **1. Improve physical accessibility to and within civic offices and other council owned buildings**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- Review signage within civic offices and other council owned buildings in accordance with BS8300, RNIB
- Renew as appropriate signage within civic buildings
- Review access to and from civic offices and amend where appropriate
- Establish a system for keeping access to council owned buildings under review and amend where appropriate
- Ensure access is suitable for the public to use toilets where appropriate in civic offices
- Sensory accessibility within civic offices and other council owned buildings to be reviewed
- Liaise with the Sensory Support Manager and other partners regarding specific issues for people with visual and hearing impairments.
- Improve entrance signage to Neath Civic Centre
- Create a disabled toilet near the committee rooms in Port Talbot Civic Centre
- Continue to undertake access audits of council buildings and prioritise identified works to improve accessible environment

### **What did we do?**

- The review of signage in council owned building and civic officers has been delayed. With the requirements of the impending Welsh Language Standards and the introduction of the Digital by Design agenda during the period, it was considered appropriate to delay review in order that these additional considerations could be included in the review. It is unlikely that this review will be undertaken prior to receipt of the Welsh Language Commissioner's determination on the Council's challenge to 55 of the Welsh Language Standards, which include the standard relating to signage.
- Improvements to signage at the entrance to Neath Civic Centre have been carried out which complemented the opening of the neighbouring new multi storey car park in October 2015.

- External access to civic offices has been reviewed and works are planned for Port Talbot Civic Centre which will include new handrails, door ironmongery, etc.
- We have established an ongoing system of review regarding the accessibility to council owned buildings which will ensure that any works to provide or improve access will be identified and acted upon in as short a time as possible.
- Surveys are ongoing to determine accessibility to toilets within council owned buildings and appropriate promotion/advertisement will be undertaken when the surveys are completed
- Liaison with the sensory support team, local equality groups and other partners is ongoing to ensure that any issues for people with visual and hearing impairments are addressed. This will be an essential aspect of the reviews in relation to signage and other accessibility activities
- A new accessible disabled toilet has been created on the second floor of the Civic Centre in Port Talbot. This provides long awaited facilities for people using the committee rooms and The Princess Royal Theatre.

## **2. Appropriate positioning of street furniture, signs, lighting columns, etc**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- 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
- 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
- Ensure play equipment at the new school development at Western Avenue is appropriate for children with a physical disability
- Ensure replacement benches within parks are suitable for people with a physical disability
- Continue to ensure that bus shelters are suitable for all users
- Continue to share and promote best practice in relation to equality within our service areas

## **What did we do?**

- During 2015-2016 there have been no street lighting refurbishment works requiring engagement on the appropriate repositioning of street lighting columns.
- There has not been any significant environmental maintenance work that would have required engagement with various groups undertaken during the period 2015-2016.
- A new play area at the new Ysgol Bae Baglan development (though not part of the school itself) has been completed during the year and will be open in summer 2016. A wide range of playground equipment has been installed which will provide appropriate play value for all children using the playground.
- As existing park benches are in good condition throughout the county borough it has not been necessary to replace any during the period. However we will continue to monitor the condition of all park benches as part of our ongoing maintenance procedures.
- We are currently working with a local group to explore a possible new play provision for children with disabilities at Gnoll Park to complement the existing sitting play provision.

## **3. Design and delivery of regeneration projects**

### **During 2015-2016 we said we would:**

- Engage with stakeholder groups, including those representing people from protected groups, to inform the design and delivery of regeneration projects

### **What did we do?**

- DNAG remains a key member of the Vibrant and Viable Places Stakeholder Group and engaging with the group in this way has helped us to deliver accessible projects.
- In all of the regeneration schemes we used the information provided by DNAG and others to inform the design

to ensure it was accessible to people with mobility and other accessibility issues.

- Through engaging with DNAG we have ensured that the works undertaken in Lower Station Road Port Talbot have resulted in improvements to accessibility with the appropriate use of tactile paving and the positioning and style of street furniture.
- Green Park Riverside Enhancements included a new park area which will be fully accessible and disabled parking provision is also part of the scheme.
- Harbour Walk was completed in June 2015, and provided improved pedestrian and cycling access to and from the railway station, Harbourside and the town centre for residents and visitors. The footpath was designed to be accessible for all.
- The Project Team met with DNAG to review accessibility issues as part of the Port Talbot Integrated Transport Hub development. As result accessibility requirements were incorporated into the design with seats/benches positioned every 50 metres, tactile paving, bollards with contrasting band to aid visibility, fully accessible public space and bus shelters.
- DNAG were heavily involved with the redevelopment of Port Talbot Parkway Station working with the Council, Network Rail and Arriva Trains. The redevelopment, completed in mid-February 2016, provides easy and safe access to trains from both sides of railway line and 24 hour pedestrian/cycle link between the town centre and Harbourside.
- The station development area with its improved accessibility and new 200 space car park with park and ride facilities improves the image of town centre and will benefit visitors, local residents and encourage investment and development.
- The completion of the new multi-storey car park in October 2015, as part of the Neath Town Centre Redevelopment, is accessible for all with increased number of disabled parking spaces, wider parking bays, bilingual signage as well as automatic doors.
- A Shopmobility facility is also included at the new multi-storey car park thereby ensuring easy access to the town centre.

## **Equality Objective 7 - Reduce gaps in the educational performance experienced by pupils due to their protected characteristics**

### **Overall summary of our progress**

2015-2016 saw an overall increase in both primary and secondary school attendance. However, this increase was not reflected across all pupil groups; in both primary and secondary school attendance levels amongst Gypsy and Traveller pupils decreased significantly over the period.

There are more effective and highly effective schools across the County Borough than previously. The Key Stage 4 Level 2 threshold indicator (5 GCSEs including English/Welsh first language and Maths) increased by nearly 3% to 58.4% in the 2014-2015 academic year and is higher than the Wales average. In the Key Stage 4 Level 2 threshold indicator (5 GCSEs or equivalent) we were the highest in Wales for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

However, the gap between girls and boys at the key stage literacy and numeracy measures at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 has reduced but the gap widened at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.

A range of relevant courses to secure young people's full learning potential continue to be provided. The percentage of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (N.E.E.T.) has reduced to 3.6%.

By continuing our Strategic Schools Improvement Programme we have been able to provide better environments for students, particularly with the fully accessible Ysgol Bae Baglan, which opened in September 2016, as well as continuing to make improvements to practices and procedures in order to assist schools in delivering agreed outcomes.

## 1. To raise levels of attendance of pupils with the protected characteristics at school

### During 2015-16 we said we would:

- Continue the practice that attendance officers support schools to collate data on protected characteristics.
- Provide monthly attendance information, provided by the data unit, to identify trends on pupils within identified groups
- 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
- Analyse the attendance information in relation to identified groups and inform relevant officers in order to develop engagement strategies with identified pupils

### What did we do?

- The collation of data on protected characteristics has been undertaken previously by attendance officers. However with changes to their roles and responsibilities during the latter half of 2015-2016 a review is being undertaken as to who is best placed to provide support to schools to continue with this practice.
- We have developed a process for the monthly collection and collation of data on identified groups which is being finalised before rolling out to relevant officers
- We continue to give priority to the analysis and evaluation of attendance across all Neath Port Talbot schools and have developed processes to share the information with key managers in the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Directorate.
- Monthly attendance figures have been provided to schools, with trend data of identified protected groups being distributed on a six monthly basis.
- Primary school attendance increased by 0.2% to 94.8% and secondary school attendance increased by 0.2% to 93.7%. The ongoing core visits to schools which include looking at attendance issues and schools attendance targets with an action plan and evaluation, has positively impacted on attendance levels. In comparison across Wales) our primary school attendance is ranked 13<sup>th</sup>, and our secondary school 15<sup>th</sup>.

- 2015-2016 saw improvements between girls and boys and non- SEN and SEN primary school attendance from the previous year; a difference of 0.1% compared to 0.13% and of 1.3% compared to 1.48% respectively. Unfortunately, this was not replicated across all monitored groups.
- 2015-2016 saw a decrease of 0.67% and 0.45% in attendance levels at primary and secondary school respectively by pupils from a 'non-white British' background.
- During the same period, attendance amongst Gypsy and Traveller children also reduced significantly at both primary and secondary school; 3.23% and 7.52% respectively.
- The number of permanent exclusions and days lost to fixed term exclusions reduced over the period

## **2. To reduce the gaps in educational performance attainment between boys and girls at Foundation Phase and Key Stages (KS) 2, & 3**

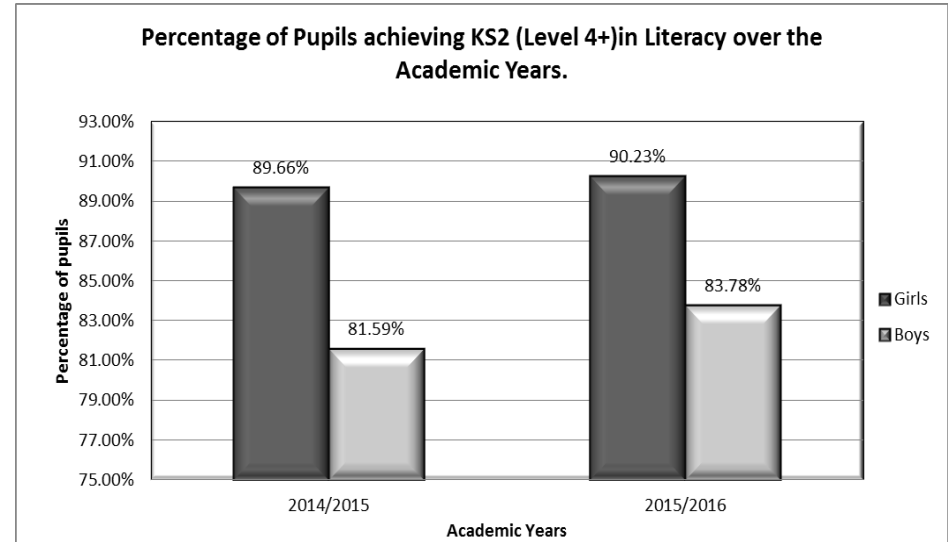
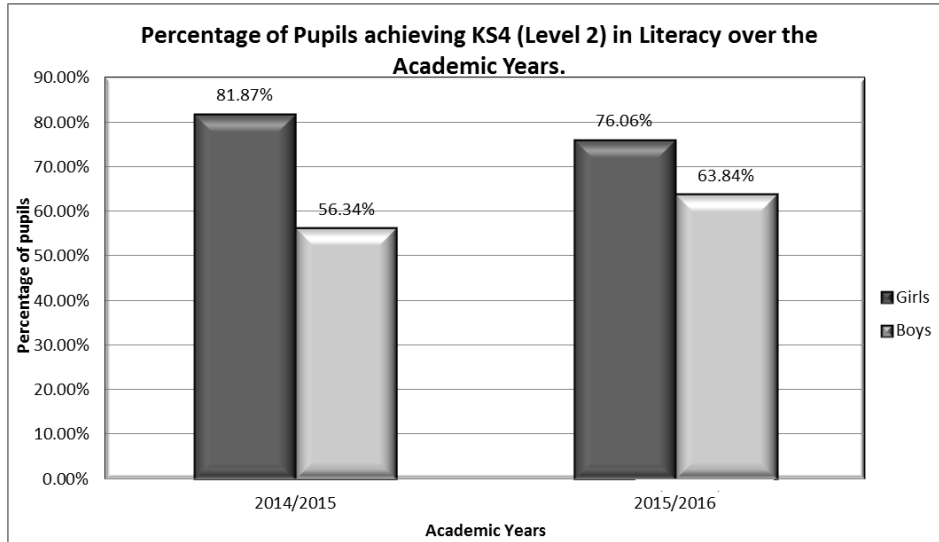
### **During 2015-16 we said we would:**

- Address areas of teaching and learning to ensure curriculum is engaging and challenging for both boys and girls.
- Training for all school staff to ensure good models of teaching and learning are consistent within our schools for literacy and numeracy.
- Identify good practice where schools are displaying consistently strong evidence in relation to attainment by boys
- Share good practice by the development of Hwb
- Update training for headteachers to undertake effective monitoring of groups of pupils to ensure appropriate progress is made based on previous achievement.
- Ensure all headteachers and deputy headteachers to receive updated training on data analysis, self-evaluation development and school improvement plans in relation to attainment of underachievement of identified pupils

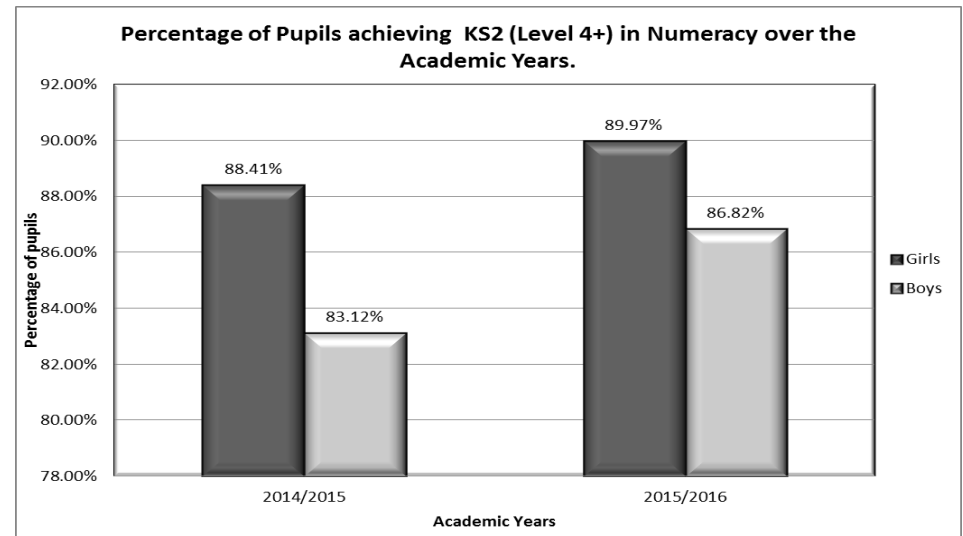
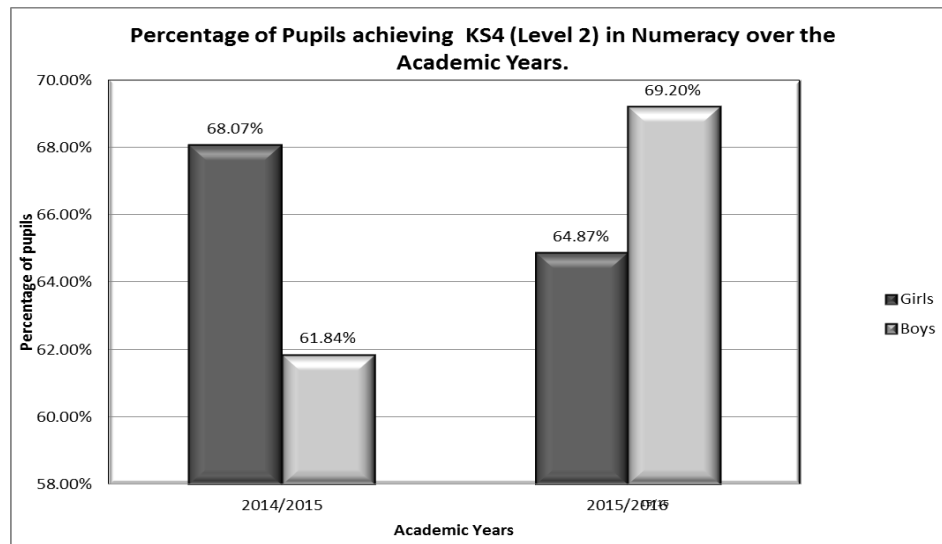


## What did we do?

- A wide range of courses linked to the regional menu of support is in place for all schools. These are delivered by ERW/NPT officers
- During 2015-2016 we have continued to identify good practice in order that it can be shared with all schools. Lesson observations, work scrutiny and the categorisation system have allowed us to gather first hand evidence of best practice.
- The Hwb is now used by all schools, particularly as part of the Securing Teacher Assessment Programme (STAP), and allows examples of best practice to be shared to good effect.
- We have continued to support headteachers with providing training in the improvement of monitoring pupil progress and analysis of data.
- During the period pupil progress has been more effectively tracked and monitored by all schools using effective work scrutiny.
- We have provided updated training to new teachers and governors on data analysis, self-evaluation development and school improvement plan particularly in relation to attainment of underachieving pupils.
- All 93 schools have received updated training with the INCERTS tracking software for headteachers, deputy headteachers and assessment coordinators with a focus on underachievement of girls and/or boys.
- There was a widening of the gap in both literacy and numeracy measures at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 3 for the academic year 2015-2016 compared to 2014-2015; Foundation Phase, 1.74% and 3.82% for literacy and numeracy respectively and Key Stage 3, 0.99% and 3.02% for literacy and numeracy respectively.
- Two of the four key stage literacy measures (Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4) improved and were at least 3% above their forecast performance for the year. Two measures at foundation and Key Stage 2 saw a drop in literacy attainment outcomes for the year.
- The academic year 2015-2016 saw a narrowing of the gap in attainment between boys and girls at two of the four key stage literacy measures (Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4). However, this is tempered by the significant decline in girls' performance at Key Stage 4; 76.06% in 2015-2016 compared to 81.87% in 2014-2015.



- Similarly there was a narrowing of the gap in attainment between boys and girls at two of the four key stage numeracy measures (Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4), which is yet again tempered by a decline in girls' performance at Key Stage 4; 68.07% compared to 64.87% in 2014-2015



**Equality Objective 8 - Ensure our employment and recruitment processes promote fairness and equality for all.**

### **Overall Performance**

As the Council was previously a Positive about Disabled People 'Two Ticks' Employer, we have now transitioned to Level 2 of the Disability Confident Scheme to become a Disability Confident Employer. This accreditation will last until 8th August 2017 and before the end of this period, we will carry out a self-assessment in order to continue our commitment to the Scheme.

[Employment Information](#) for the period 2015-2016 has been reported separately.

## **During 2015-16 we said we would:**

- Review our employment policies every three years:-
  - Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
  - Grievance Policy and Procedure
  - Domestic Violence Policy
  - Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy
  - Flexible Working Policy
- 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
- 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 the Efficiency Board)
- Publish annual report on employment information by protected characteristic. (see above)
- Undertake ongoing consultation on monitoring developments and future objectives. These are to be on the agenda annually for the Local Government Services Forum

## **What did we do?**

- We completed the review of our Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures in October 2015 in line with Wales Audit Office requirements.
- We continue to work to review our remaining policies and the review of our Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy and Flexible Working Policy will be completed by the end of March 2017. The timescale for the review of our Grievance Policy and Procedure and Domestic Violence Policy have yet to be confirmed.
- During the period 2015-2016 we provided training for 25 recruiting managers and have arranged additional training sessions for a further 17 managers
- We have continued to work to progress an employee portal to capture necessary data and a scoping report on will be submitted to the Digital by Choice project board early in 2017.

- The data for 2015/16 was reported to Personnel Committee on 1 September 2015. There is little change in relation to the makeup of the Council's workforce as a result of the restriction on external recruitment.
- As part of our consultation process the Local Government Services Forum on 6 July 2015 considered our equality objectives. The Trade Union Side were happy with the format and we will continue to consult on this annually

**Gender Pay Gap 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.**

**During 2015-16 we said we would:**

- Address existing discrepancies
- Identify and address any gaps in data
- Draft and publish pay gap information in employment information annual report
- Policy decision that all new starters commence on the minimum point of the grade. This is monitored via the Starting Salaries Monitoring Form -

**What did we do?**

- We are currently working on a reporting process for the gender pay gap in line with recent legislation requirements. This will help us identify and address any gaps in the data we hold and ensure effective monitoring for the future.
- We continue to report pay gap information as part of the employment information annual report reported to Members in September each year.
- As part of our commitment to ensure fair and equitable practices we made a policy commitment as part of the introduction of job evaluation in 2008 that all new starters commence on the minimum point of the grade. This policy remains in force and is monitored via the Starting Salaries Monitoring Form.

## **Section 4 – Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty and Specific Duties**

During 2015-2016 we concentrated on reviewing our equality objectives and revising the [Strategic Equality Plan](#) as well as taking forward the subsequent actions. We have been conscious of ongoing financial challenges, reduced capacity, greater expectations and the changing demographic in Neath Port Talbot, prompting an early review of our objectives. We continued to work to meet the equality objectives while bearing in mind the revision of and the potential changes to the objectives.

Concentrating our efforts on improving the accessibility of our website, working to address hate crime and domestic violence and improving our equality impact assessment process has enabled to improve areas which have greatest impact on people's lives.

Our equality objectives and Corporate Improvement Priorities have been aligned to ensure a more holistic approach. This has ensured that progress made is complementary to both, for example, the work on improving digital inclusion across the County Borough helps meet both our equality objectives and our wider improvement priority. Progress against our improvement priorities can be found in the [Corporate Improvement Plan Annual Report 2015-2016](#).

As a result of the position with the BME Forum at the end of 2014-2015 we ensured that the commitment to keep the Forum alive would be reflected in the revised plan. Working together during 2015-2016 plans were put in place to recruit a dedicated development worker with the aim to develop the Forum so that its membership reflected the profile of local communities; as directed by the Forum, to develop projects and initiatives that promote the wellbeing of people from local BME communities, including the development of project proposals and funding bids and to strengthen links between the Council and the BME communities. Following a recruitment process, begun in summer 2016, an appointment was made in October 2016.

The Welsh Language Commissioner issued a Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice in September 2015. After considering the implications of the standards the Council submitted a challenge to 55 standards, with 54 standards considered as valid. The Commissioner's final determination is still awaited.

We must produce an annual report on how we have complied with those standards applied to the Council and the first Annual Report was published on 30 June 2016 in accordance with statutory requirements.



## **Identifying and collecting relevant information**

We continued to engage with members of the public, partners, local communities and interest groups to gather information, which not only helped shape equality objectives but also our other strategies, policies and plans as well as influencing the delivery of our services.

We are aware that the identification and collection of information remains a key element particularly of the equality impact assessment process. During the year there has been some improvement in our collection and analysis of the data we hold in relation to service users and staff. However, we have not made as much progress in this area as we would have liked, particularly in the area of employment data. This remains an ongoing issue which we are determined to work to improve further over the life of the plan.

Improvements to data collection was one of the recommendations of the Equality Impact Assessment Audit and while some work has been undertaken to address this, including raising staff awareness of engaging with local equality groups, we continue to work to improve our understanding of our local communities.

### **Some examples of our work during 2015-2016**

- The Community Safety Team continues to produce a quarterly newsletter which includes information on Hate Crime and continues to promote the 101 telephone number for reporting.
- 'Paws on Patrol', celebrated its first anniversary in October 2015. The scheme aims to encourage responsible walkers and dog walkers to report any suspicious behaviour, fly tipping, graffiti, faulty street lighting and Anti-social Behaviour. As at March 2016 over 340 members had signed up to the scheme.
- With Welsh Government grant funding we have been able to make a number of improvements to facilities at existing Gypsy and Traveller sites. These include refurbishments to utility blocks, new fencing and two previous de-commissioned pitches have been brought back into use, increasing the total number of publically owned residential pitches in Neath Port Talbot from 54 to 56.
- We along with Swansea and Bridgend promoted information around slavery during the Anti-Slavery/Hate Crime awareness week at prominent places in town centres and public places.

- The extension to the Cae Garw Gypsy and Traveller site was agreed and the additional 11 pitches were completed by the end of March 2016.
- A local Gypsy & Traveller Forum has been established. The objective of the Forum, made up of key partners and stakeholders working with the local community, is to share information between partners and provide an opportunity to work collaboratively in meeting the needs of the local community in the areas of Health, Housing, Education and Support. One of the outcomes of discussions at the Forum was the visit from the play bus at the Briton Ferry Gypsy and Traveller site during the Easter holidays.
- We reduced the average time taken to deliver a disabled facilities grant and delivered more grants, 338 in 2015-2016 compared with 323 in 2014-2015. Customer satisfaction surveys revealed a very high level of satisfaction, over 96% of respondents indicating that their quality of life had improved as a result of the adaptation and 100% agreeing that they no longer need to consider moving home.
- The new residential care home, Plas Bryn Rhosyn, at Caewern, Neath, opened in November 2015.
- We established a Partnership Agreement to ensure close working between us and the DWP in supporting claimant's transition to Universal Credit. With the success of this Agreement during 2015-2016 we have put in place a new agreement to address the requirements for 2016-2017.
- We put in place 'When I Am Ready' arrangements as required within the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014. These arrangements support the opportunities for young care leavers beyond the age of 18 to remain with their foster carers up to the age of 21 (or 25 if in further education), as a means of improving the outcomes for young people as they move into adulthood.
- Cabinet Members approved a Family Support Strategy in May 2015, which will be reviewed annually for the next three years.
- We established a Participation and Engagement Working Group in March 2015 to work directly with children, young people and their families. An Engagement and Participation Officer was appointed in July 2015 to support the Working Group.
- Holocaust Memorial Day held in February 2016 looked to the present and the future, with performances themed

‘Don’t Stand By’ exploring individual’s responsibilities not to be bystanders to hate crime and prejudice, nor to international threats of genocide.

- We completed work on the new fully accessible 3-11 secondary school, Ysgol Bae Baglan, ready for pupils to start the new school year in September 2016.
- Work has been ongoing to support the BME Forum throughout the year and following numerous discussions with the Forum it was agreed that the greater support was required for it to fulfil its potential. A development worker post was identified as an appropriate support and so a recruitment process was begun with an appointment made in October 2016.
- We continue to support the Older Persons’ Council to ensure it continues as a crucial engagement mechanism to provide independence and information for older people
- Local equality groups were instrumental in the development of the equality objectives. Workshops were held to fully explore the needs views and requirements and translate these into actions/objectives.
- Black History Month 2015: Great Black Women Past and Present was the title of the celebrations in 2015. Activities to celebrate and promote Black History Month took place throughout October culminating in the celebratory event in November 2015. Once again the Minority Education Achievement Service organised the event, held in Pontardawe Arts Centre with contributions from local schools.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

We recognise the continuing importance of equality impact assessments and during 2015-2016 we have been keen to explore how best to improve the assessment process.

An equality impact assessment audit was undertaken in autumn 2015 and a number of recommendations were identified to improve the process, including a review of data collection, further training, the revision of the toolkit including the development of the monitoring section and ongoing scrutiny practices. During the year we have been able to implement some of these with work continuing to realise the remaining recommendations during 2016-2017.

## Specific Employment Information

[Employment Information](#) for the period 2015-2016 has been reported separately.

The data has been analysed by the protected characteristics of gender, race, disability and age and by specific criteria. While the data in relation to these characteristics is of good quality there are gaps in the information that we are currently able to collect in relation to the following protected characteristics: gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

The data is either for the 12 month period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, or, where appropriate, a snapshot of the workforce on 31 March 2016.

## Section 5 - Have your say

We would like to know your thoughts about this report and our equality objectives in order to help us make decisions on important matters. If you would like to share your views please contact the Corporate Strategy Team by email [corporate.strategy@npt.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.strategy@npt.gov.uk) or by post to the Corporate Strategy Team, Neath Port Talbot CBC, Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ

A number of services hold consultation and engagement events and these can be accessed on our website: <http://www.npt.gov.uk/haveyoursay>



Follow us and add your comments to the Council's Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/NeathPortTalbotCBC>



Follow this report and add your Tweets on our Twitter Page: [@NPTCouncil](#)