

# **Bridgend County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 Action Plan**

The Strategic Equality Plan action plan will be reviewed annually, to demonstrate progress against actions, incorporate new areas of work for the council, changes to legislation and the development of any new objectives for the duration of the plan.

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## **Objective one: education**

Everyone who accesses education should be free from discrimination, bullying and abuse in educational settings.

### **Outcome one**

To reduce incidents of hate based bullying in schools

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

1.1.1 Review the process in place to report hate-based bullying to the local authority in schools, to include homophobia,

disability, religion and belief as well as gender based and racial incidents

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

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

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support & Equalities team.

### **Outcome two**

To amend the curriculum in schools to reflect the Black Lives Matter campaign.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

1.2.1 To fully implement the findings and recommendations of the Welsh Government working group review of learning resources available to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and 'cynffin' across all parts of the curriculum within our schools.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

### **Outcome three**

To improve access to equality information in schools for both learners and staff

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

1.3.1 Provide equality, unconscious bias and critical thinking training to all learners as part of the curriculum.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

1.3.2 Provide equality, unconscious bias and critical thinking training to teaching staff and all school governing bodies.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

#### **Outcome four**

Ensure individual needs are considered in adult learning and other educational settings.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

1.4.1 To consult with learners to determine and monitor needs throughout programs of learning; to offer additional support where needs are identified and offer inclusive yet differentiated learning opportunities.

The lead department will be: Education and Family support.

1.4.2 Continue to offer additional resources where any deficit or disadvantage is identified.

The lead department will be: Education and Family support.

#### **Outcome five**

Develop a whole education approach to Violence against women domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

1.5.1 Work with schools to ensure the effective implementation of the nine elements of the whole school approach across all schools in Bridgend.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

**The protected characteristics these outcomes will affect are:**

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment

- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Poverty

The ways of working identified in the Future Generations Act this objective will work within are:

- Long term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

The corporate priorities of Bridgend County Borough Council that this objective will affect are:

- Smarter use of resources
- Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient

## **Objective two: work**

Promote a more inclusive workforce and improve the participation, wellbeing and opportunities for development for those with protected characteristics.

### **Outcome one**

To ensure equal pay for equal work.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

2.1.1 Develop knowledge of our workforce by improving the collection of workforce data by encouraging employees to provide up to date equality information.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.1.2 Promote awareness campaigns linked to protected characteristics.

The lead department will be: Human Resources & Equalities team.

2.1.3 Continue to report on the gender Pay Gap and progress gender equality actions.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.1.4 Establish process to monitor pay levels for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic employees and those with a disability with the view to identify and address any gaps that may be discovered.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

## **Outcome two**

To support our communities into the world of work.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

2.2.1 Employability Bridgend to work in partnership with DWP, Working Wales and training providers to deliver programmes which support people to prepare for employment.

The lead department will be: Communities Directorate.

## **Outcome three**

To improve diversity in our workforce, with a focus on age, race and disability.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

2.3.1 Introduce more graduate and apprenticeship opportunities to increase workforce diversity.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.3.2 Review recruitment processes and introduce specific campaigns with an aim to attract applications from the BAME community and people with a disability.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.3.3 Become more disability confident as an employer by maintaining our Disability Confident status and developing our Disability Confident action plan.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

#### **Outcome four**

To increase training opportunities for staff.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

2.4.1 To review existing e-learning provision to ensure appropriate and relevant equality and diversity training is available, including the section on equality legislation of the mandatory corporate induction module to encourage increased participation in training.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.4.2 Provide equality and unconscious bias training to employees.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

2.4.3 Provide equality and unconscious bias training to councilors to encourage increased participation in training.

The lead department will be: Democratic Services.

2.4.4 Work with community organisations such as Stonewall, Mental Health Matters, People First Bridgend, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST) and Show Racism the Red Card to develop training opportunities for employees.

The lead department will be: Human Resources & Equalities team.

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### **Objective three: living standards**

Tackle poverty and support independent living by considering the impact of any policy changes or decisions under the socio-economic duty.

#### **Outcome one**

To ensure that the socio-economic duty is fully considered as part of the council's governance and strategic decision making processes.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

3.1.1 Review the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to include poverty as a protected characteristic.

The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

3.1.2 Produce guidance and training for staff on the implementation of the socio-economic duty.

The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

3.1.3 Evidence the impact of the changes to the EIA in the EIA annual report produced to Cabinet Committee Equalities.

The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

#### **Outcome two**



Demonstrate commitment to low paid employees by introducing Real living wage.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

3.2.1 Progress implementation of the Real Living wage to all council employees benefitting those on the lowest pay grades. The lead department will be: Human Resources.

### **Outcome three**

Support low income families through increased commitment for free school meals.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

3.3.1 Continue to ensure families are able to access free school meals and provide food parcels for families eligible for free school meals throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

3.3.2 Deliver the national School Holiday Enrichment Programme, subject to funding in agreed local areas.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

### **Outcome four**

Support learners by ensuring all schools participate in the Period Dignity scheme.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

3.4.1 Continue to work in partnership with Welsh Government and Wings Cymru to ensure free menstrual products are provided to all learners in primary, secondary and special schools within the county borough.

The lead department will be: Education and Family Support.

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### **Objective four: health and wellbeing**

Support and promote good mental and physical health within our communities and our workforce and provide opportunities to participate in leisure and cultural activities.

#### **Outcome one**

To improve the physical wellbeing of staff.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

4.1.1 Implement the COVID-19 risk assessment for employees.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

4.1.2 Promote the health and wellbeing of employees through partnerships with Halo, the Cycle to Work scheme.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

4.1.3 Development of menopause protocol.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

## **Outcome two**

To improve the emotional wellbeing of staff.  
The actions to achieve this outcome are:

4.2.1 Introduce and implement a health and wellbeing protocol to support all employees.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

4.2.2 Work with partners to provide training and resources in mental health awareness, mindfulness and resilience.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

4.2.3 Promote mental health awareness to staff and the support mechanisms in place, including adapting to work in the COVID-19 pandemic.  
The lead department will be: Human Resources.

4.2.4 Work with partners to develop BAME, LGBTQI and disability staff networks (BLM action).  
The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

4.2.5 Development of carers protocol.

The lead department will be: Human Resources.

### **Outcome three**

To provide and promote activities in the community for people with protected characteristics.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

4.3.1 Work with Sport Wales, Welsh Government and Arts Council for Wales to develop inclusive and integrated community activities for people with a protected characteristic in partnership with Halo and Awen.(e.g. super-agers, Hynt scheme, free swimming).

The lead department will be: Social Services and Wellbeing.

4.3.2 Work with Disability Sport Wales to operate the national disability sport programme for households in Bridgend and across the Central South region.

The lead department will be: Social Services and Wellbeing.

4.3.3 Work in partnership with Town and Community Councils and other partners including Halo Leisure, Awen, Play Wales, Sport Wales, schools and Welsh Government to offer inclusive and integrated play opportunities for all securing play sufficiency requirements across the county.

The lead department will be: Social Services and Wellbeing.

### **Outcome four**

To raise awareness of hidden disabilities within the community and with businesses across the county borough.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

4.4.1 Promote awareness of the Hidden Disability sunflower lanyard scheme and awareness of support cards, including the 'Can't Wait card', to ensure that our communities and businesses become more aware of the needs of people with hidden disabilities.

The lead department will be: Equalities.

4.4.2 Celebrate Awareness Days and weeks that highlight hidden disabilities such as deaf awareness week, dementia action week and mental health awareness days.

The lead department will be: Equalities.

4.4.3 Improve awareness of hidden disabilities within the workforce.

The lead department will be: Equalities.

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### **Objective five: safety and respect**

Ensure that people within our communities have access to services that support them to live without fear of violence or abuse, and to be treated with respect.

#### **Outcome one**

Develop and promote community cohesion.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

5.1.1 Signpost European Union (EU) citizens living in Bridgend County Borough to the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme and provide the appropriate level of local authority support.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

5.1.2 Monitor and respond to community tensions relating to the Brexit process.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

5.1.3 Identify community groups that represent the range and diversity of Bridgend citizens and develop appropriate communication channels.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

5.1.4 Hold community events, promote positive community cohesion and celebrate diversity. Explore the use of online methods for community groups in light of COVID-19.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership & Equalities Team.

5.1.5 Work collaboratively to support Pride events through the brand 'Proud Councils'. To demonstrate our commitment to the LGBTQI community and our workforce through the development of Proud Councils policies and practice across all local authorities who are involved with Proud Councils.

The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

## **Outcome two**

Improve awareness and outcomes of hate crimes.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

5.2.1 Develop targeted activities to ensure victims and potential victims of hate crime are aware of reporting mechanisms and have awareness of the support services available to them in collaboration with South Wales Police and Victim Support.

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

5.2.2 Work with partners to arrange events and activities to promote Hate Crime Awareness week (October).

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

### **Outcome three**

To embrace Black History Month.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

5.3.1 Embrace Black History Month (October) by working closely with schools, and by holding public events to highlight the reality of the negative impact of racial inequality and celebrate the contribution made by BAME communities to our local and national life as well as working with partner organisation such as Awen Cultural Trust to promote and raise awareness of BAME activities such as The Paul Robeson exhibition.

The lead department will be: Equalities Team.

### **Outcome four**

To improve awareness of how to report VAWDASV and the support available.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

5.4.1 Identify three annual campaigns and plan and deliver appropriate actions to maximise their impact to include:

- Older persons
- Learning disability
- Male victims

The lead department will be: Community Safety Partnership.

**The protected characteristics these outcomes will affect are:**

- Age
- Disability



- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
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### **Objective six: participation**

Encourage people and communities to participate and engage in issues that are important to them, and influence the decisions that affect their lives.

#### **Outcome one**

To improve participation in consultations.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

6.1.1 Ensure people are appropriately represented in council consultations and engagement events, and can participate in the future design of council services.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

6.1.2 Ensure all council consultations consider the development of an easy read and youth version dependent on the potential impact.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

6.1.3 Review how the Citizens' Panel operates and its interface with relevant council decisions.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

6.1.4 Include the Youth Council in consultations to ensure participation in the future design of council services.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

## **Outcome two**

To provide resources to staff to improve communication with the public.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

6.2.1 Ensure resources are available to staff to assist them in providing information that is easy to understand and takes accounts of individuals' needs.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

Outcome three – Improve community engagement with protected characteristic groups.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

6.3.1 Strengthen our relationship with protected groups through attendance at forums and meetings to ensure people are included in and kept up to date in council activities.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

6.3.2 Share all consultations with the Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum, and where relevant provide face to face or online engagement opportunities for member organisations.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

#### **Outcome four**

Promote community events and equality through the use of corporate social media.

The actions to achieve this outcome are:

6.4.1 Share information and promote events such as PRIDE Cymru, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Hate Crime awareness month and others via our bi-lingual corporate social media channels.

The lead department will be: Consultation and Engagement Team.

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- Involvement

The corporate priorities of Bridgend County Borough Council that this objective will affect are:

- Supporting a successful sustainable economy
- Smarter use of resources
- Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient