



Blaenau Gwent Strategic Equality Plan

Annual Report 2017 – 2018



Back Cover

Blaenau Gwent Strategic Equality Plan **Annual Report 2017-2018**

This document is available electronically at:
<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/council/equalities-welsh-language/equality-information-advice/>

If you require this document in a different format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio version, etc. please contact:

Policy, Partnerships and Engagement

Corporate Services and Strategy
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Municipal Offices
Civic Centre
Ebbw Vale
Blaenau Gwent
NP23 6XB

Phone: 01495 356145

Email: pps@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Contents Page

Chapter 1 – Introduction	5
Chapter 2 – The Steps the Council has taken to Monitor, Identify, Collect and Evaluate Relevant Equality Information	7
Identifying and Collecting Community Data	8
How the authority monitors and uses this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty	9
Any reason for not collecting the relevant information	10
Chapter 3 – Equality Information and Data Analysis	12
Population Data and Gender	12
Disability	13
Age	16
Ethnicity	18
Sexual Orientation	19
Religion	21
Marriage and Civil Partnership	22
Pregnancy and Maternity	24
Gender Re-assignment	25
Education	26
Local Authority Disciplinary and Grievances	29
Job Structure, Contractual and Pay Data Analysis	31
Local Authority Leavers	36
Applicants	38
Gender Pay Gap	39
Chapter 4 - Progress on Blaenau Gwent's Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020	40
A statement on the effectiveness of the steps the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives	40
Objective 1	41
Objective 2	43
Objective 3	46
Objective 4	54
Appendices	60

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The Equality Act was introduced in 2010, bringing together and replacing previous anti-discrimination laws with one single Act. The Equality Act 2010 includes a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), also referred to as the 'General Duty', which requires Public Authorities to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In 2016, Blaenau Gwent Council published its Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020 which sets out how it aims to deliver against the General Duty, covering the following protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Sex;
- Race – including ethnic and national origin, colour or nationality;
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief;
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to eliminate discrimination in employment; and
- Pregnancy and maternity.

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duty) (Wales) Regulations 2011, sets out a number of 'Specific Duties' to support the Council in their performance of the General Duty. As such Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is required to produce and publish an annual equalities report by 31 March each year, on its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)¹.

¹ A copy of the Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020 for Blaenau Gwent can be found at <http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Council/Equalities/StrategicEqualityPlanActionPlan2016-2020.pdf>

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has identified four equality objectives. These are:

1. Make equality vital in decision making and service provision;
2. Be an equal opportunity employer, with a workforce that is aware of, and understands the equality agenda;
3. Do our best to engage, protect and support those people in our community that need it the most;
4. Promote understanding and acceptance of diversity within our communities.

This is the second Annual Report of progress made against the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020. The report covers the period 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, and will set out:

- the steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- how the authority has used information in meeting the aims of the general duty;
- any reasons for not collecting relevant information;
- a statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information;
- progress towards fulfilling each of the authority's equality objectives;
- a statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives; and
- specified employment information.

Throughout the report we will include other relevant progress and additional developments across our strategic equalities objectives, against the requirements of general and specific duties from a Local Authority, Education, and Community perspective.

Chapter 2 - The steps the authority has taken to monitor, identify, collect and evaluate relevant information:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council continues to identify, collect and evaluate equalities information to evidence and inform its decision-making in relation to its employment policies and practices. This approach will help us to:

- understand the effect of policies, practices and decisions on staff with different protected characteristics and to plan more effectively;
- identify where there is a risk of discrimination and identify action to remedy this;
- identify possible steps to further advance equality or foster good relations;
- identify key equality issues for the organisation;
- identify whether the workforce reflects the community it serves;
- develop equality objectives and measure progress;
- make practices more transparent and help to explain how and why decisions are taken;
- demonstrate to the public an authority's equality achievements as an employer; and
- demonstrate to public sector regulators and inspectorates that an authority understands its staff composition and is monitoring its performance.

Identifying and Collecting Organisational Data: The Council collects initial equalities information on staff during the recruitment stage, during which all applicants have an opportunity to complete a set of equality specific questions. Each equality question offers a range of responses, which includes a 'prefer not to say' option for any of the non-mandatory questions, should applicants decide not to disclose.

Following recruitment, employees are encouraged to share relevant information at different points of their employment, for example, through training and development opportunities, and through the recently introduced Employee Self-Service (ESS) system. The ESS system holds information on individual employees allowing staff to secure access to their personal information and edit their details at any point to reflect any changes in their personal circumstances.

This is particularly advantageous for employees who have been with the Council for several years, during which their circumstances may have changed. This process of self-disclosure will ensure that employees data and information is accurate and is kept up to date.

As this system has only recently been introduced, we will be unable to fully monitor any benefits during the current annual period, however it is anticipated that we will begin to identify the effectiveness of this system during the next annual period. Therefore, the data presented in Chapter 3 has been extracted from the Council's iTrent system, which is currently the most reliable source of data to reflect the Council's workforce.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council acknowledges that it cannot require employees or members of the public to provide any information in relation to their protected characteristic, if they choose not to do so. As a result, there are noted data gaps across the protected characteristics, many of which are outlined in the data analysis section below. These identified gaps have allowed us to outline our data development needs throughout the report, which will set the context for future equality priorities.

Identifying and Collecting Community Data: The collection of community data by protected characteristic remains a challenge for all local authorities with limitations in the available data sets. Census 2011 data remains the most reliable source of data representing the general population, and this report will use Census 2011 data to demonstrate local equality demographics due to there being very little statistical change monitored in annual population statistics.

Population estimates available through the Office for National Statistics are also presented in this report, in areas where Census 2011 data is limited, for example, for sexual orientation. It is worth noting that where Annual Population Statistics are used, this data will fluctuate in terms of whole population estimates.

In addition to the Census 2011 and population estimate data, the Council also utilises a number of other opportunities to collect and use equality information to improve the services we provide. Additional information is sourced through consultation activities with community groups, and wider engagement discussions, which have recently been coordinated by the Public Service Board's (PSB) Engagement Group.

The PSB draws on a broad spectrum of economic, social, environmental and cultural expertise, facilitated by the PSB Strategic Support Group. This Group oversees engagement and consultation activity with the Citizen's Panel, which is made up of a diverse range of residents who provide their views on key local and national issues. The group is being supported by the Youth Forum, School's Grand Council, 50+ Forum and Access for All Forum.

Over and above this data, the Council is able to collate equalities-relevant data from engagement activities open to the public, namely "Blaenau Gwent We Want" (BGWW). The BGWW engagement process, which is outlined in more detail below has supplemented existing data and information from specific groups across the community. Input and feedback from community members during the engagement process provides added value to the Council's progress towards achieving our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

How the authority monitors and uses this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty:

The authority continues to review the way in which it monitors equality information as a means of achieving the general duty. The data we collect, both internally through our organisational database and externally through various information and data sources, helps us to understand our staffing demographics and the demographics of the wider community.

Our monitoring arrangements help us to plan and deliver our services more effectively whilst ensuring we consider the needs of our equality groups in the decision making process. This report will outline our existing monitoring arrangements and will identify the improvements which have been made in our data collection processes since the previous annual report.

This report will consider last year's data as a comparator to the data presented in the current annual period in order to draw out any key themes and patterns identified within the analysis process. This will allow us to recognise how we can use our policies, practices and decisions more effectively to advance equality of opportunity within the organisation and across the wider community.

Any reason for not collecting relevant information:

The data analysis section below illustrates an ongoing Data Development Opportunities, which relates to the high proportion of employees choosing not to disclose equality information during the application stage. This is not necessarily a result of an inability to collect the information, however it is an issue which will impact on the way in which data is presented and used.

Evaluating Relevant Equality Information:

The following section in part sets out how the Council has used the relevant equalities information it identifies and collects in meeting the three aims of the general duty, as it seeks to understand its workforce and the community it serves.

The sections below will set out our data reporting requirements under the PSED in relation to:

- people employed by the authority on 31 March each year by protected characteristic – men and women employed, broken down by:
 - job/grade (where grading system in place)
 - pay
 - contract type (including permanent and fixed term contracts)
 - working pattern (including full time, part time and other flexible working patterns)

In addition, the below information will be presented for each of the different protected characteristics in relation to:

- people who have applied for jobs with the authority over the last year
- employees who have applied to change position within the authority, identifying how many were successful in their application and how many were not
- employees who have applied for training and successful applications
- employees who completed the training
- employees involved in grievance procedures either as complainant or as a person against whom a complaint was made
- employees subject to disciplinary procedures
- employees who have left an authority's employment.

The following section in part sets out how the Council has used the relevant equalities information it identifies and collects in meeting the three aims of the general duty, as it seeks to understand its workforce and community it serves.

The section looks to evaluate the collected equalities related data and in doing so meets the requirement ***to provide specified employment information, including information on training and pay.***

Chapter 3 – Equality Information and Data Analysis

This section will present organisational data by protected characteristic in line with the requirements set out in the EHRC guidance. This section is structured to reflect the data for each protected characteristic, followed by any identified Data Development Opportunities and any further actions to take forward as a result of any development issues.

Overall, there is a wealth of information available against each protected characteristic. However consideration is given to the lack of data available in relation to some protected characteristics. On average, 14.8% of the data on employees protected characteristics is unknown and this is significantly more prevalent amongst some protected characteristics than others. This is an ongoing Data Development Opportunities and one which will remain a priority in future strategic equality planning.

The data below, extracted from the Council's iTrent system has been analysed as per individual employee, with duplicate data relating to dual roles carried out by the same employee having been removed in order to avoid replication.

Population Data and Gender

Organisational Data: During the snapshot date of the 31st March 2018, 3,028 people were employed by Blaenau Gwent Council.

There has been a 6.6% reduction in the amount of Council employees (429 less staff) since the previous snapshot date of March 2017. Of the 429 reduction in employees, there was a 7% decrease in the overall male workforce population (111), and a 6.4% decrease in the overall female workforce population (318).

The gender split remains consistent across the organisation since the previous annual period, representing 24% (716) / 76% (2312) of males and female employees respectively. This baseline data split will be used as a comparator for all data relating to gender within the analysis section.

Community Data: According to the 2011 Census data, the overall population figure for Blaenau Gwent during the 2011 period was 69,609 residents.

Gender estimates represent almost an equal split with an estimated 34,298 (49%) male residents, and 35,311 (51%) female residents. Annual population data demonstrates very little variation in the year on year population data both in relation to overall population estimates, and gender specific estimates.

Overall Analysis of Population and Gender Data: Blaenau Gwent Council's workforce has reduced by 6.6% in 2017 – 2018 since the previous annual period. This reduction in staffing is likely to be as a result of financial pressures however these issues will be explored in more detail within this section. Female employees are significantly more represented in the organisation than male employees potential reasons for this will be explored further down and will include analysis in relation to job role, job structure, occupation and grade. With an overall 6.6% reduction of the workforce from the previous annual period, the workforce reduction by gender is mostly equal.

As there is a 24% / 76% gender split, it would be expected that any reduction in the workforce population would reflect this however as the reduction is mostly level for males and females, it is suggested that there is a disproportion in leavers by gender. Reasons for this will be explored through the 'Leavers' analysis process in the sections below.

Data Development Opportunities: There are no significant issues in the availability of the Council's internal staffing data in the context of gender. The availability of community data remains an ongoing issue nationally. Community data is reviewed annually however increased scrutiny of community data through external data sources would offer additionality in the anticipated population and gender trends when identifying the direction in which our population is progressing.

Disability

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' or 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal activities.

Organisational Data: Of the 3,028 Blaenau Gwent employees, 41 consider themselves as having a disability under the Equality Act 2010. This represents 1.3% of the workforce population, which is relatively consistent with previous annual data of which 1.5% of the workforce population were considered disabled.

In comparison to the baseline gender split, there appears to be slightly more male employees who's disability is known to the organisation (66%), compared to female employees (34%). It is important to emphasise that organisational data on disability is the 'known' data, which is reliant on disclosure of employees during the application stage.

During the application stage, 15% of employees did not disclose their disability status, or chose not to disclose this information which therefore impacts on the organisation's ability to identify the proportion of disabled staff within the organisation. This issue needs further attention in order to fully understand a more representative amount of disabled employees.

Community Data: The most up to date and therefore reliable source of community data relating to disability is available through the Annual population data set undertaken via the Office for National Statistics. The table below represents the datasets taken from the 2015 estimates and highlights that the percentage of Blaenau Gwent residents with a disability (25.4%) is above the Wales average (22.5%).

The population of Blaenau Gwent who are not considered disabled contributes to 2.2% of the overall Wales population who are not considered disabled, whereas the amount of disabled ('Total Disabled'²) people across Blaenau Gwent contributes to 7.6% of the overall Wales population who are considered as disabled.

Those considered as disabled are defined in the context of Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) Disabled³, those who have a 'work-limiting disability'⁴, and those who are both DDA disabled and work-limiting disabled⁵.

Disabled	Wales	Blaenau Gwent	%
Total Not Disabled	1401900	31300	2.2%
Total Disabled	140000	10700	7.6%
% Disabled	22.5%	25.4%	--
DDA Disabled	101100	2600	2.5%
Work-Limiting Disabled	62000	1500	2.4%
DDA & Work-Limiting	246800	6600	2.6%

² 'Total Disabled' includes those who are DDA disabled only, work-limiting disabled only and both DDA and work-limiting disabled.

³ Disability defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).

⁴ Work-limiting disability includes people who have a long-term disability which affects the kind of work they can do.

⁵ Total DDA disabled include those who are DDA disabled only, work-limiting disabled only and both DDA and work-limiting disabled.

Overall Analysis of Disability Data: The proportion of disabled people in Blaenau Gwent is 2.9% higher than the Wales average and contributes to 7.6% of the overall proportion of disability across Wales. Disabled employees, or at least ‘known’ disabled employees make up 1.3% of the workforce population, which remains relatively consistent with previous annual data on disability (1.5%). It is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data in respect of current disabled staff as a further 15% of the workforce did not disclose if they had a disability.

Nevertheless, Blaenau Gwent has a broadly high disabled population therefore additional efforts need to be targeted to ensuring the organisation is as representative as possible of the wider community. This includes efforts in recruitment processes, encouraging disclosure and furthering efforts to promote equality within the workforce.

The organisation would benefit from reviewing the way in which it asks people about their disability in order to create a categorisation process to identify types of disability among employees. This in turn may provide deeper analysis to identify if disability is attributed to any specific areas of the organisation. Within a wider context, some issues faced by disabled people when accessing employment include both physical and financial barriers and can include additional barriers in accessing suitable transport.

The Welsh Government’s Framework for Action on Independent Living⁶ sets out a range of Government actions to help tackle some of the key barriers for disabled people in Wales, including general lower skill and qualification levels; physical barriers including transport and building accessibility; attitudes of some employers and lack of awareness of disability and associated needs.

The principles of the Framework will be used to steer engagement with disabled residents, and to increase confidence among employees to disclose their disability status. It is within this framework that Blaenau Gwent Council has strengthened its engagement activities with disabled people through the Access 4 All forum, with specific engagement activities on transport accessibility during the annual period (see section 4).

⁶ Welsh Government’s Framework for Action on Independent Living - <https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/equality-diversity/rightequality/disability/framework-for-action/?lang=en>

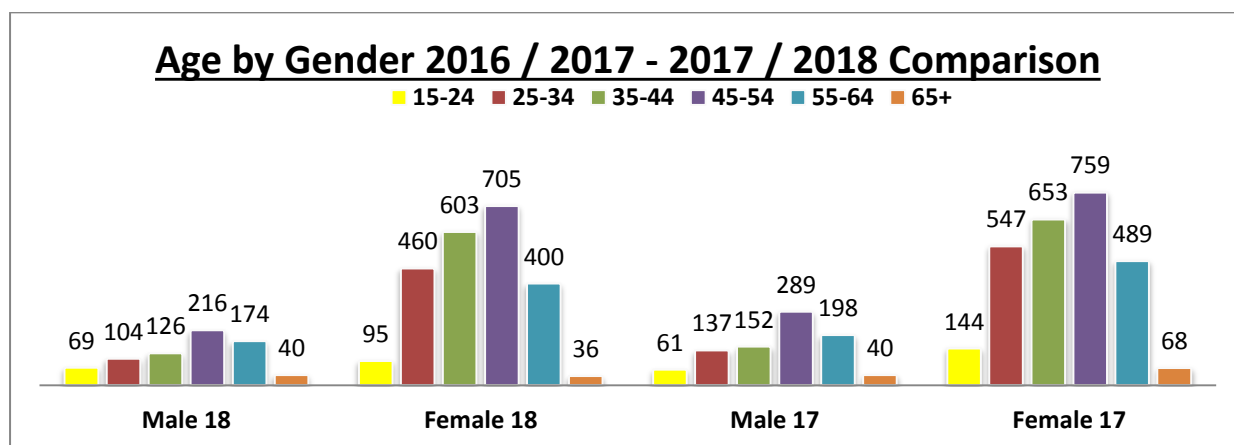
Data Development Opportunities: At the point of recruitment, applicants are asked to state whether they have a disability and are given an option to detail the type of disability. Due to the high number of applicants not disclosing if they have a disability, the primary data development need is specific to increasing the understanding of actual disability data within the organisation.

This may be done through increasing opportunities for disclosure, and / or reviewing the way in which questions specific to disability are asked. A high number of those not disclosing their disability status might be an indicator of the lack of understanding of individual conditions in the context of disability, but can also be specially attributed to the lack of confidence to disclose information on a disability and / or health condition.

It is anticipated that identifying and understanding the barriers faced by staff when disclosing their personal information will position us as an organisation to better understand our workforce and how to support the needs of our employees. We will aim to build on our current commitment through the Disability Confident commitment although we understand that this should not be carried out in isolation of other development opportunities.

Age

Organisational Data: Similar to the previous annual period, the most populated age group for Blaenau Gwent Council employees are those aged 45-54, whilst the least populated age group is 65+ followed by 15-24. Analysis of employee age is carried out in many other areas below including pay, grade and structure which adds value to the overall analysis of the current age demographic in the organisation.



The chart above provides a visual representation of the age of Council employees, broken down by gender over a two year period. The highest proportions of employees are female, aged between 45 and 54 years. The largest reduction in staffing since the previous annual period was amongst female employees aged 55-64 (89 less staff). Similarly, there were large reductions within the 45-54 age groups of male employees (70+ less). In addition, the largest increase of employees was within the 25-34 age groups of female employees (87 more employees).

Council employee figures in respect of age, similar to local and Wales's average data, Council employees predominantly occupy the 25-44 and 45-64 age bands with figures at 42% and 49% of employees respectively, which is largely consistent with community data. Council employees aged 16-24 (5%) and those aged 65+ (4%) are underrepresented within the organisation.

Community Data: Within this section, community data relating to age is presented as a comparative to the Wales average population data in an attempt to draw out any significant themes. The majority of Blaenau Gwent residents are aged between 45-64 (28%), and 25-44 (25%). Local data on age share similarities with the overall Wales average in all age groups.

There is a slight difference (2%) in the 45-64 age groups with Blaenau Gwent Data (28%) demonstrating slight increase in the 45-64 age group compared to the Wales average (26%). In comparison to community data, there is a significant difference between employees aged 65+ (4%) and local residents aged 65+ (20%). The table below represents the data by age presented for Blaenau Gwent, Wales as well as organisational data:

Age Group	Blaenau Gwent Council	Blaenau Gwent Residents	Wales
0 – 15	N/A	17%	18%
16 – 24	5%	10%	11%
25 – 44	42%	25%	24%
45 – 64	49%	28%	26%
65+	4%	20%	21%

Overall Analysis of Age Data: Although there are some inconsistencies between some age groups of employees and residents, the overall data for age is relatively consistent. Blaenau Gwent has a largely older population with the highest age group between 45-64 (28%), which is slightly above the Wales average (1% higher than other age groups). The majority of Blaenau Gwent Council staff are aged 45-64 (49%) which remains consistent with previous annual data.

In Wales, men's employment is highest up to the age of 45 and then it declines. For women employment is highest between 45-59 (source: Anatomy of Inequality in Wales). This is consistent with organisational data however understanding employment patterns has been identified as a data development need.

Data Development Opportunities: The level and quality of data analysis during this reporting period has increased since the previous annual period however, particularly for age, there is scope to make further improvements in the analysis. There is potential to improve analysis for age in the context of occupation, grade, and associated data specific to all age groups within the Council.

Ethnicity

Organisational Data: The majority of employees (87%) stated that their ethnicity is British including – Welsh/English/Northern Irish or Scottish. Minority ethnic groups make up only a small proportion of the organisation, many of which is represented at less than 1% (see Appendix for ethnicity information). 12% of employees did not state their ethnicity at the point of recruitment, this links in to a wider issue of 'not known' data in the organisation which will be looked at as a specific area of work. Data on ethnicity remains consistent with ethnicity data within the previous annual period with no significant changes in any ethnic groups to suggest any proportionate variation.

Community Data: Blaenau Gwent is minimally diverse in relation to ethnicity with all ethnic groups other than white representing <1% of the population. The Census 2011 data and supplementary Annual Population data from January 2018 demonstrates that 1.5% of the population considered themselves as non-white (Census 2011) and 1.8% during the 2018 Annual Population Survey. Estimated data demonstrates that 99.5% of the population consider themselves as 'white' including White – Welsh, English, Scottish and Northern Irish.

Overall Analysis of Ethnicity Data: National research indicates that unemployment among minority ethnic groups is relatively high. The 'Is Wales Fairer' 2015 Equality and Human Rights Commission report demonstrates that amongst ethnic minority groups, static employment rates meant that substantial gaps between ethnic minority and white people persisted with 51% compared to 72%. Similarly, the 'Anatomy of Inequality in Wales' report, almost half (46%) of Bangladeshi and Pakistani people are not in employment and for Bangladeshi and Pakistani women this rises to 72%. This would indicate that low levels of Council employees from ethnic minority backgrounds may be linked to a wider issue around unemployment in general, however local research specific to the unemployment issues within the area would need to draw out these conclusions.

Nevertheless, it is noted that our Organisational data is relatively consistent with the wider community data on ethnicity with 'White / British' being the predominant ethnic group for both employees and community members. Other ethnic minority groups represent less than 1% for both organisational, and community data.

Data Development Opportunities: In comparison to other protected characteristic data, the amount of employees who choose not to disclose is relatively low (12%). There is however, a need to explore any barriers faced by ethnic minority groups when accessing employment.

Sexual Orientation

Organisational Data: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) staff represents 1% of the workforce population collectively, with no significant difference in this data from the previous annual period. Employees who disclosed their sexual orientation as heterosexual make up 73% of the workforce population, which is slightly higher than the 71.5% of the workforce from the previous year.

A key theme within the data relating to sexual orientation relates to the incidence of employees who did not disclose their sexual orientation (26%). Data across all recorded protected characteristics presents inconsistencies in relation to 'not known' data where employees have either left blank or have chosen not to state, however unknown data is higher in the context of sexual orientation than any other demographic.

At the point of recruitment, 26% of employees either preferred not to state what their sexual orientation is. This data suggests that there is a disinclination among staff to disclose their sexual orientation; however reasons for this are unknown.

Community Data: The 2011 Census questionnaire did not seek to explore the sexual orientation of individuals, and therefore data is limited. The Office of National Statistics recently began publishing mid-year population statistics taken from annual population survey results on 'sexual identity'. The 'sexual identity' population survey data is collected and published on a regional basis, and for Blaenau Gwent, is detailed within the South East Wales dataset.

The survey, undertaken in January 2018 received 1,196,300 responses, which provides us with a base figure to draw initial conclusions, particularly as there are no other substantial data sets available for sexual orientation. The data shows that on average, 96% of the population within the South East Wales area identify as heterosexual, with only 2% identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual, and a further 2% not providing a response. Although this information provides an initial baseline to form an idea of the proportion of the LGB population, it is likely that these estimates likely to underestimate the true size of the LGB population.

Overall Analysis of Sexual Orientation Data: The data representing those identifying as heterosexual in the wider community is significantly higher than those identifying as heterosexual within the organisation (96% / 73%). Data for LGB is relatively consistent between organisational data (1%) and community data (2%).

The more significant inconsistency in the relationship between organisational and community data exists in the non-disclosure of sexual orientation information within the organisation. Although proportionately a high amount of individuals did not disclose their sexual identity during the annual population survey (2%) which is equal to the amount identified as LGB (2%), a disproportionately high amount of Council employees (26%) chose not to disclose their sexual orientation.

This indicates that during employment, individuals are unwilling to disclose this information. Reasons for this are unclear, however in order to understand this, it is acknowledged that barriers to disclosing this information needs to be considered.

According to the EHRC, LGB adults are around twice as likely to report experiencing unfair treatment, discrimination, bullying or harassment at work, than other employees. An individual's sexual identity is a personal part of their identity and in most cases individuals may prefer to keep this aspect of their identity private.

The high proportion of employees who did not disclose their sexual identity may be a reflection of individual's confidence in the confidentiality of personal information within the organisation. Lack of data collection may be because individuals choose to keep their sexual identity private in the workplace in order to avoid negative treatment. There may be various reasons surrounding this however until these issues are explored within the organisation there will be only limited understanding of this issue.

Data Development Opportunities: The most significant anomaly in the organisational data for sexual orientation is the lack of disclosure by employees and applicants. Due to there being such a high proportion of unknown information on employees sexual orientation, it is difficult to ensure that workplace policies and practice is inclusive of the needs of employees identifying as LGB. Future data development will need to focus efforts on understanding the barriers people face when disclosing their sexual identity at the point of recruitment, and to consider these reasons within the context of the organisations ability to create a supportive and inclusive environment for potential and current employees.

Religion

Organisational Data: Organisational data on religion remains consistent with the findings of the previous annual data analysis process. During this annual reporting period, 40% of employees identified as Christian, 43% had no religion, 16% of employees not disclosing their religion and 1% other religious groups.

Community Data: Community data demonstrates there is limited diversity in the Blaenau Gwent area in respect of religion. According to Census 2011 data, Christianity is the primary religion in the local area, which makes up just over 50% of the population, with a further 41% of the population stated that they have 'no religion'. A further 8% of the Blaenau Gwent population had 'not stated' their religion. A number of minority religious groups exist across Blaenau Gwent and it is therefore difficult to identify any specific equality themes in this data.

Overall Analysis of Religion Data: When comparing organisational and community data on religion there are some noted differences. Christianity is the primary religion with just over 50% of the population of Blaenau Gwent stating that they are Christian; however this is compared to 40% of the workforce. Similarly, 16% of the workforce did not disclose their religion at the point of recruitment, however only 8% of residents chose not to disclose.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Is Wales Fairer' report outlines some key challenges through their summary report, which, in the context of religion, include issues surrounding recruitment and development in employment where they recognise that improvements need to be made to increase employment rates of young people, disabled people, ethnic minority people and Muslim people.

Data Development Opportunities: Data on religious groups both in the Council and community is limited, which makes it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions. However further research is required in to the skills level, employment rates and opportunities available for those who identify with any religious group.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Organisational Data: The majority of the workforce (52%) identifies as being married, and a further 30% identifies as 'single'. This data has remained relatively steady since the previous annual period. In addition, only 5% of employees did not state their marital status, which although is linked to a wider concern of non-disclosure of equalities information, this is relatively low in comparison to other protected characteristics.

While Civil Partnership is defined as a legally recognised relationship between two people of the same sex, it is noted that organisational data for those in a Civil Partnership exceeds the amount of people identified as LGB.

This would either suggest that employees are not fully aware of what constitutes a Civil Partnership, or a proportion of staff who did not disclose their sexual orientation (26%) do in fact identify as LGB. To illustrate this, the data demonstrates that only 31 staff (1%) disclosed their sexual orientation as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual whereas 49 employees (1.6%) stated that they were in a Civil Partnership.

In addition, only 5 of the 31 employees who self-identify as LGB are in a civil partnership, a further 33 heterosexual employees stated that they were in a civil partnership and a further 11 employees who did not disclose their sexual orientation stated that they are in a civil partnership.

As the data states that the majority of employees who stated that they are in a civil partnership are heterosexual, this would suggest that there is a misunderstanding of the meaning of the marital status terminology. However, an individual definition of sexual orientation must not be definitive identifying criteria of their sexual orientation, and therefore although staff have identified as heterosexual, it may be possible for them to engage in a same-sex civil partnership.

Community Data: The community specific data in relation to marriage and civil partnership is obtained from the Council's births, death and marriages department on an annual basis. Between April 2017 and March 2018, there is only a slight decrease in the amount of registered marriages in Blaenau Gwent.

However a notable point in this context is in relation to the way in which information is collected. For example, same sex marriages and civil partnerships appear to be collected in a different way. This will need to be explored further in order to provide consistency in the way in which we term and collect data around marriage and civil partnership. The table below represents registered marriages for this annual period, and for the previous annual period.

	All Marriages	Opposite Sex Marriages	Same Sex Marriages	Civil Partnerships
2016 – 2017	172	168	4	0
2017 – 2018	151	146	5	0

Overall Analysis of Marriage and Civil Partnership Data: There are very little changes to data relating to marriage and civil partnership both within the organisation and within the wider community. One specific theme in the data relates to the terminology used and understanding of this terminology. In addition, civil partnership data must also be considered in the context of sexual orientation data. Due to a high instance of unknown sexual orientation data, it is likely that an individual will also be unlikely to disclose their marital status.

Data Development Opportunities: As outlined above, there are data issues relating to employee's understanding of what constitutes a civil partnership and how the Registrar's record both same sex marriages and civil partnerships. Both the application process and the Employee Self-Serve system would benefit from a clear definition on civil partnership as a marital status.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Organisational Data: There are 1,158 female employees of child bearing age (16-44), accepting that there will be cases outside of this range. During the annual period, 123 employees took maternity, maternity or adoption leave, this represents 4% of the workforce. Of these 123 employees, 7 took adoption leave during the period (6%), a further 103 employees took maternity leave (84%) and 13 employees took paternity leave (10%). The average age of employees taking maternity, paternity and adoption leave was 33 for both male and female staff. 58% of employees between the ages 25-34 took maternity, paternity or adoption leave with an additional 38% of those aged 35-44.

Additional data, including the protected characteristic information on those staff who took pregnancy, maternity or paternity leave during the annual period did not highlight any significant themes. However, consistent with other areas of data analysis, just over a quarter of employees who took maternity, paternity or adoption leave, chose not to disclose their sexual orientation.

The average amount of days taken for overall maternity, paternity and adoption leave was 232 days. The average amount of days taken for adoption leave was 279, 256 days on average for maternity leave, and a further 12 days taken on average for employees taking paternity leave.

Community Data: During the annual period 1st April 2017 until 31st March 2018, there were 9 births registered through the Council's registrar. The reason these numbers are low is because there is no maternity hospital in the Blaenau Gwent area. Births are registered in the District in which they occur, which in the case of local residents to Blaenau Gwent, could be a number of differing districts, including those out of county, where more specialist care was required. The 9 births registered in the local district area, could be home births, but there could be other explanations.

Overall Analysis of Pregnancy and Maternity Data: A high proportion of employees who took maternity, paternity or adoption leave had not disclosed their sexual orientation at the point of recruitment. This is not a data trend which has been identified previously however it is one which would be worth further exploration. Blaenau Gwent Council's policies around maternity, paternity and adoption leave are fair and transparent which is reflective in the data outlined above.

Data Development Opportunities: According to the EHRC 'Pregnancy and Maternity Related Discrimination and Disadvantage' Report, in Britain around 1 in 9 pregnant women or new mothers felt forced to leave their job or were treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job, and 1 in 10 mothers were discouraged from attending ante-natal appointments. This is the first annual report which has monitored this level of pregnancy and maternity data, therefore further analysis during the next annual reporting period would provide valuable comparisons.

Gender Re-assignment

Gender identity is a personal internal perception of oneself. Where the gender with which a person identifies does not match the sex they were assigned at birth they share the common characteristic of gender re-assignment. A person can be at any stage in the transition process – from proposing to reassign their gender, to undergoing a process to reassign their gender, or having completed it. In contrast, sex is biologically determined.

Data Development: Data on gender identity and overall population data on transgender is scarce, and the Office of National Statistics does not produce estimates of the number of transgender people living in the UK. The ONS notes that their 2021 Census Topic Consultation identified a need amongst a number of data users for information about gender identity for policy development and service planning; especially in relation to the provision of health services.

These requirements are strengthened by the need for information on those with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This lack of data creates a challenge for us as we strive to be an organisation representative of our community; nevertheless, we continue to ensure that the organisation is non-discriminatory in the recruitment and selection process in order to ensure a diverse workforce.

The Council's Equal Opportunities policy was recently reviewed and refreshed which outlines the commitment and support options available to any applicants or current employees who are transitioning or who are proposing to transition. In addition, the recruitment process provides an opportunity for applicants and staff to disclose their transgender status, further support is available through their line management structure.

Education

Pupil Level Annual School Census PLASC

The Education department offers a wealth of information on its students through its requirement to provide Welsh government with Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data. The data requirements to provide PLASC information to Welsh Government covers many aspects of the student, and includes some equalities information.

In the below sections PLASC data is presented on the available protected characteristic information for primary and secondary phase students, however it is worth noting that not all protected characteristic information is given due to it not being required by Welsh Government. The PLASC information outlined below is observed at January 2018 and represents pupil level data at that point in time; however there is very little change between academic periods which will make any impact on variation of the data.

In January 2018 there were 9,326 students across all primary and secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent. Primary phase students represent 68% (6,340) of the student population, and secondary phase students represent 32% (2,986) of the overall student population. There is an equal and proportionate gender split across both primary and secondary school phases.

There is very little diversity within Blaenau Gwent schools, which is consistent with wider community data however, PLASC reporting requirements can often restrict the level of data collected on the students beyond the Welsh Government requirements. The majority of primary phase students (**92.7%**) and secondary phase students (95.9%) are from a 'White British' ethnicity. All other ethnic groups across primary and secondary phase students are proportionately low and therefore no conclusions can be drawn from ethnicity data.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Primary and secondary phase students who are considered to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) are categorised within three areas of need including students who present with Special Education Needs (SEN) and have a SEN 'Statement', those who are in receipt of support at 'School Action' level and those in receipt of support at 'School Action Plus' level which means additional external support is in place.

Primary Phase SEN Status: Of the 6,340 primary phase students, 80.4% are considered non special educational needs students, whereas 19.6% (1,242) of primary phase students are considered to present with SEN. In general, there are more male students who have SEN status (65.4%) in comparison to female students in the primary phase (34.6%). SEN students in primary phase are primarily in receipt of School Action support (48.6%), with an additional 44.7% of students receiving School Action Plus intervention and only 6.7% of SEN students considered fully 'Statemented'.

Secondary Phase SEN Status: In comparison, significantly more secondary phase students are considered SEN, representing 28.7% of the overall secondary school population. Similar to primary phase students, the majority of secondary phase SEN students are male (65.9%). In addition, there is a similar pattern in the level of support between primary and secondary phase students. There are slightly more students in the secondary phase who are SEN 'Statemented' (19.9%), however School Action Plus support is provided to the majority of SEN students in secondary phase (47%), and an additional 33.1% of SEN secondary phase students receive School Action intervention.

The self-evaluation annual reports for Special Educational Needs (SEN) students represent key analysis of school data of key stage outcomes for pupils with SEN, to include: -

1. Statemented pupils in the Foundation Phase, Key Stage (KS) 2 and KS3.
2. School Action Plus pupils in the Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3.
3. School Action pupils in the Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3.

* Note – data for SEN students in some aspects of the data analysis process may be statistically unreliable. In the last annual reporting period, end of key stage data shows that outcomes for Statemented, School Action Plus and School Action remain below expected levels.

However, this is to be expected given that all pupils included in the above analysis will have a higher than average degree of difficulty in learning when compared to their peers.

The end of Key Stage data shows that outcomes for Statement, School Action Plus and School Action remain below the expected levels. However this is to be expected given that all pupils included in annual analysis will have a higher than average difficulty in learning when compared to their peers.

Inclusion Teams

The Education Welfare Services works with all children and young people to enable them to access school regardless of social background, and any of the protected characteristics. For example, educational support has been provided to the four Syrian families that have come to Blaenau Gwent as part of the resettlement programme.

The Senior Education Welfare Officer has also improved opportunities for the Elected Home Education (EHE) community to ensure that they receive access to universal services and are also fully supported post 16.

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works with schools to meet the needs of vulnerable learners, including those with ALN. These are prioritised by the EPS in partnership with schools and other agencies.

The Inclusion service works closely with other regional LA's to ensure a consistent approach to meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Gypsy Travellers

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) research has shown that Gypsy and Traveller communities in Britain experience wide-ranging inequalities. Many stereotypes about Gypsy and Travellers already exist negative attitudes and ingrained prejudices within wider parts of society can be hard to tackle.

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places every Council in Wales under a statutory obligation to carry out an accommodation needs assessment in relation to Gypsy Additional Achievements in Education.

In 2017, there were 64 Gypsy Traveller students in Blaenau Gwent schools, 45 were on roll, 14 were post-16 and 5 were elected home educated. Of the three students who completed their final secondary phase year, all went on to further education. Average attendance of Gypsy and Traveller students during the annual period was 83.4%, which is an increase of 2.4% from the previous annual period. All 45 Gypsy Traveller students completed their minimum 200 sessions before traveling compared to almost all students in the year prior (93.6%).

Performance

A self-evaluation report was produced in March 2018, which provides a summary of the key achievements and areas of development within education. Some of the key themes extracted from the report, relevant to equalities are outlined below:

- With regard to student within the special school (Pen-y-Cwm) who have physical and complex needs, the report demonstrates individual pupil progress based on a comprehensive range of data show that nearly all pupils made progress from their original starting point.
- Ethnic Minority Groups – The report states that the performance of ethnic minority pupils in Blaenau Gwent for 7 and 11 year olds closely mirrors that of mainstream pupils. In addition, Gypsy Traveller pupils demonstrate progress in their overall learning.
- Progress has been made through the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Provision Improvement Plan. New provision for pupils presenting with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is in place, the new all-through school for pupils presenting with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) opened in January 2018.

Local Authority Disciplinary and Grievances

Both grievance and disciplinary data has been collected and analysed by protected characteristic, and has been further presented as a comparison for previous annual grievance and disciplinary data. Within the current annual period, there were 113 disciplinaries and 40 grievances.

Disciplinaries: Of the 113 disciplinaries undertaken within the period, 70 were received by female employees (62%) and a further 43 were received by male employees (38%). Given that the base figure representing the male and female split across the organisation (24% / 76%), the data representing those in receipt of a disciplinary is not in proportion with baseline data for gender, which indicates that proportionally more male employees received a disciplinary during the annual period.

Employees aged 45-54 were included in the majority disciplinarys and grievances during the annual period. No employees aged 65+ were involved in a disciplinary during the annual period and only 2 employees aged 16-24 were included in a disciplinary process during the annual period. A high proportion of staff involved in a disciplinary has not disclosed their ethnicity (29%).

Of the 113 disciplinarys, 18 were categorised as 'Disciplinary – Safeguarding' and 95 were categorised as 'Disciplinary Process'. However this doesn't necessarily illustrate the valuable information surrounding these grievances and we are unable to draw meaningful conclusions from an equalities perspective. Similarly, a high proportion of employees whose disability is not known (33%) were involved in the disciplinary process during this period and again this is significantly higher than the average baseline not known figure (14.8%) and also significantly higher than the disability average baseline not known figure (15%).

Furthermore, a high proportion of staff involved in the disciplinary process who's LGB status is unknown is at 38% which is more than double the baseline average (14.8%) and higher than the not known baseline data for sexual orientation (26%).

For ethnicity and religion the amount of employees involved in a disciplinary whose religious and ethnicity status is not known is higher than the baseline average (18% not known religious information and 29% not known for ethnicity information). As both exceed the baseline average, this would merit further exploration.

Grievances: Within the 2017 – 2018 annual period, 40 grievances were carried out, of which 27 male employees (68%) and 13 female employees (32%) were involved. Although the role of the employees within the grievance process is unknown, the data indicates disproportion in the gender split when comparing to the baseline organisational gender split as outlined above. Of the 40 grievances, 1 was received in relation to 'poor management', 10 were received via the 'Dignity at Work' policy and an additional 29 were received under the category of 'Terms and Conditions'.

Analysis and Actions: For both grievance and disciplinary data, using the baseline gender split, it would appear that males are significantly more represented in both grievance and disciplinary processes than females.

Within the current annual period, there were more disciplinary and grievances compared to the year prior. Although the availability of data for grievances and disciplinaries is improving, it is recognised that further improvements need to be made in relation to additional detail around the reasons for disciplinaries, and the protected characteristic data for those involved in both the grievance and disciplinary processes.

This would allow us to recognise if discrimination exists within the organisation, which can be further broken down by job structure and occupation to allow further intervention if necessary.

Job Structure, Contractual and Pay Data Analysis

Full-Time / Part-Time Job Roles

The uneven distribution of jobs and working hours among men and women is significant in the maintenance of gender pay disparities, more so than gender pay discrimination. Within the organisation, part-time roles account for 54% of all Council posts. There is only a slight increase in part-time posts from the year prior (2016 – 2017) with 25 additional part time posts (<1%), however the expectation would be to see a decline in posts in consideration of the fact that there are less employees in the authority compared to the prior annual period.

Part time posts are primarily occupied by female employees (88%) compared to only 12% of male employees in part time roles. This is consistent with National research aimed at identifying trends that contribute to ongoing issues around gender pay. For example, a study by Parken et al (2014) shows men hold almost 2/3 of full-time jobs across Wales. Full time jobs tend to be higher graded and have more potential for progression than part-time job roles.

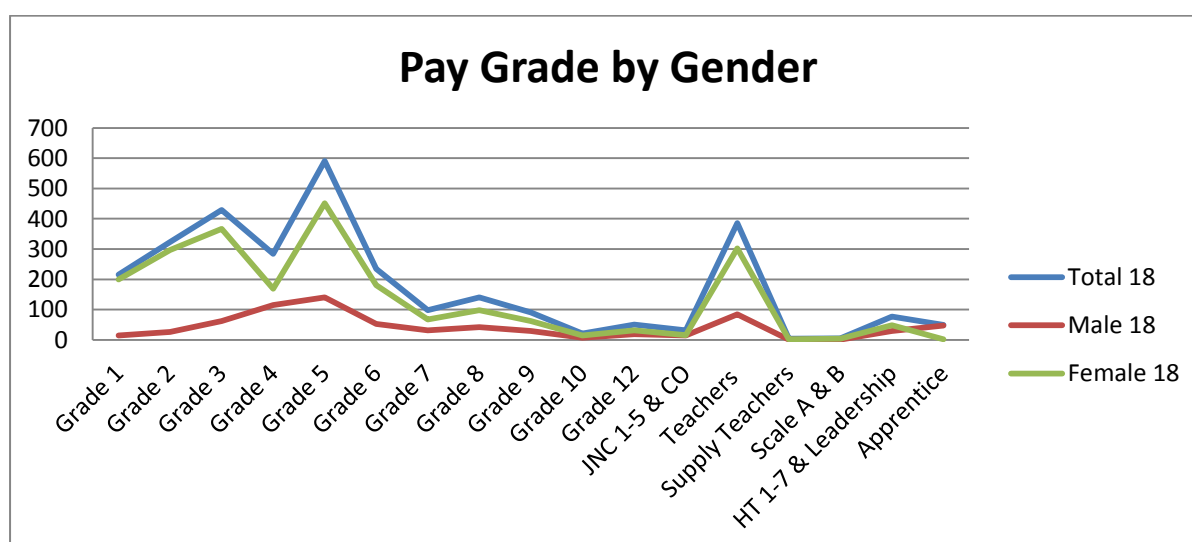
There was a significant decrease in full-time posts (14.5% decrease) in the current annual period with current data showing 1330 occupied full time posts within the organisation, which represents 44% of all posts. Similar to part-time roles, female employees predominantly occupy posts that are full time (61.2%) however this would be expected due to the 76% / 24% baseline gender split. Male employees occupy 38.8% of full time posts however when comparing to the baseline data, more male employees occupy full time roles proportionately within the Council.

This is consistent with National research, which demonstrates that men hold nearly two-thirds (64%) of available full time jobs in employment and self-employment in Wales, while women hold around 80% of all available part time jobs.

Analysis of organisational data supports overall research around gender, job structure and pay, which suggests that more women occupy part time posts. A higher proportion of female employees occupy part-time posts in lower grades (Grades 1-5), compared to 124 female occupying part-time posts on higher grades (Grades 6-10). Across Wales, research suggests that 90% of men work full time while just 10% work in part time roles, however part time work remains strongly correlated to traditional female occupations.

This means that women entering the traditional female occupations will find that at least 40%+ of all jobs are likely to be offered on a part time basis, thus restricting opportunities to access full time work⁷. In light of this, we need to understand whether part-time working is always a 'choice'.

Grade by Gender: Female employees are significantly more represented in lower paid grades, particularly within the lowest three grades where there is a disproportion in the gender split between male and females. The chart below represents the organisations pay grades by gender.



⁷ Parken et al. (2014) Working Patterns in Wales: Gender, Occupations and Pay.

The representation of females on Grade 1 is 93% compared to 7% of males; similarly females represent 92% compared to 8% of males on Grade 2 and a further 86% of female and 14% of male employees on Grade 3. Grade 6 becomes slightly more balanced in regard to the gender split with more representation in favour of male employees.

Male employees occupy higher grades in general with 48% of male employees and 52% of female employees representing these grades. Although female employees occupy 52% of JNC & graded roles, this is not reflective of the organisational baseline gender split of 24% male to 76% female.

Educational staff are more representative of the organisations gender split in comparison to the rest of the organisation grade by gender structure with 22% of male teaching staff compared to 78% of female teaching staff.

Grade by Protected Characteristic: Those with a disability appear to occupy lower paid grades, however with only 1.8% of disabled staff within the organisation, it is difficult to provide deep analysis in this context. The majority of disabled staff are employed within grades 1 to 6 (66%), with the highest proportion of disabled staff (19%) employed at grade 5. 24% of the overall disabled workforce population are employed within grades 7 to JNC & CO, with a further 10% employed within the educational sector.

According to Parken et al. (2014) gender pay disparities result from a combination of differences in the ways men and women participate in labour markets. These factors include employment segregation, the undervaluing of 'women's work', access to training, the unequal division of labour between paid and unpaid work, labour market structuring on the assumption of gender roles regardless of childcare and adult development care in the care in the working age years, and pay discrimination. This combination of interacting factors makes reducing gender pay gaps extremely complex.

Younger people generally occupy lower grades within the organisation with the highest proportion of employees aged 16-24 occupying grades 1-4, however 35% of grade 1 staff are aged 55-64 and occupy traditional gender roles, which is outlined in the section below. Those aged 16-24 are underrepresented in higher grades and are not represented from grade 9 and above.

The 16-24 age group largely includes occupations such as assistant and apprentice roles, teaching and other assistant roles. This younger age group also accounts for 18% of temporary, relief and fixed term contracts. In addition, teachers are predominantly aged between 25 – 34 (43%) or 35-44 (40%) with less than 1% of teaching staff aged 55-64 and 65%.

There are no significant themes identified across other protected characteristics when analysing data by grade, however as highlighted in the above analysis against sexual orientation, those who wish to not disclose (26% overall) are highest in Grade 1 (30%), Grade 11 (33%) and among teaching staff (31%).

Furthermore, a high proportion of Head Teachers and 'Leadership' staff within education did not disclose their religion (29%). There appears to be proportionately more, although still minimal, diversity among Grade 8 staff with 5% LGB staff, 4% disability and 2% ethnicity other than white, which is higher than other grades. Reasons for this are unknown and cannot be identified through this analysis process, however further analysis and investigation would benefit from attempting to explore this.

Occupational Segregation: Organisational data by grade demonstrates that women generally occupy lower grades, particularly grades 1 to 3 and within these grades, both women and men occupy gender suggested roles.

Grade 1 – With a 93% (female) and 7% (male) split within this Grade, gender specific roles are suggested particularly among females. These roles include cleaning operative (53.5%) and midday supervisor (check if dinner lady role). These are typically traditional female roles.

Grade 2 – Female employees in grade 2 (92%) occupy gender traditional roles such as breakfast Club Supervisor (57%) and catering assistant whereas the very low amount of males within this grade are employed as an Invigilator (58%).

Grade 3 – The gender split within this grade is relatively high although slightly less than grade 1 and 2 with 86% (female) and (14%) male split. The predominant male occupation within this role at 42% is 'Senior Midday Supervisor'. The roles of female employees within this grade are centred on caring professions (44%) including 21% as a 'Care Assistant'; and 23% as a 'Home Carer'.

Between grades 1 – 3 there is an average of 90% of female employees and an average of 9% of male employees. These grades represent the lowest paid occupations in the Council and the data demonstrates the occupations segregated for both male and females. This demonstrates that females are over represented in lower paid and traditional gendered roles, which in turn highlights that there is a suggestion of occupational segregation within the organisation.

Both positive and negative impacts on these groups can be observed, and in some cases this can be viewed as a positive impact for men or women who already possess the confidence and a skill set in a particular area of employment, which provides them with security in applying for and carrying out specific job roles. However on the other hand, occupational segregation limits the opportunities to break out of stereotypical and traditionally gender specific roles as there may be cases where women and men respectively are encouraged to engage in less traditional roles.

Analysis of Job Structure, Contractual and Pay Data Analysis:

Women entering typically female occupations will find that at least 40% of work on offer is contracted on a part time basis, which shines a light on whether part-time working is always a 'choice'. Full time working patterns are the norm for those in higher grades throughout the occupational strata.

According to the 'Anatomy of inequality in Wales' report, disabled men are three times more likely to have no qualifications (35%) than non-disabled men (12%). 37% of disabled women have no qualifications compared to 13% of non-disabled women.

Within Blaenau Gwent Council, there is a large gender split among employees, with female staff significantly more represented in the organisation than male staff, with a 76% : 24% split respectively, this is compared to a 51% : 49% split across the wider community. Through our quarterly equality analysis process, there is evidence to suggest that men typically occupy male orientated roles including 'Community Services Operatives'; 'Engineers'; 'Winter Maintenance Drivers' and 'Caretakers', whereas women generally occupy roles such as 'cleaning'; administrative roles'; Caring roles' and 'early years / child care'.

It is reassuring that the 2017 EHRC Report⁸ accepts that occupational “segregation, however, is difficult to analyse because of different datasets and definitions, while its effects are difficult to interpret because segregation is the result of both supply (men and women tending to gravitate to different types of jobs) and demand (for example, employers’ prejudices may act as a barrier).”

Although we have highlighted trends in suggested gender specific occupations within the organisation, we also recognise that both female and male employees are equally represented in senior and managerial roles. The Council’s Wider Corporate Leadership Team is equally representative of female and male senior management staff, in addition to a newly appointed female Managing Director.

Whilst our explanation for occupational segregation includes the gender role argument described above, we acknowledge that other factors include family constraints that may encourage entry into part-time work, and part-time work often occurs in more routine occupations.

Local Authority Leavers

Between 1st April 2017 and 31st March 2018, 438 employees left the authority. Of the 438 leavers, 111 were male employees and 327 were female employees. There were slightly more leavers during the 2017 – 2018 annual period, compared to the 2016 – 2017 annual period with 22 more staff leaving the authority in 2017.

The highest proportions of leavers within the annual period were those aged 25-34, which accounted for 23.5%. However, those aged 45-54 and 55-64 accounted for equally as many leavers with 22% and 23% leaving rate respectively. The lowest age group of leavers were those aged 65+ which accounted for only 4.5% however, proportionately this age group isn’t well populated within the baseline employee data.

The highest age group of leavers by gender were males aged 45-64 which accounted for 30% of the overall leavers. The lowest leavers were females aged 65+ which accounted for 4% of overall leavers.

Of the 438 leavers, 8 employees identified as LGB, which in consideration to the low baseline amount of LGB staff (31), represents a high proportion (26%) of those leaving the authority, this was also slightly higher than the year prior in which 5 LGB staff left the authority.

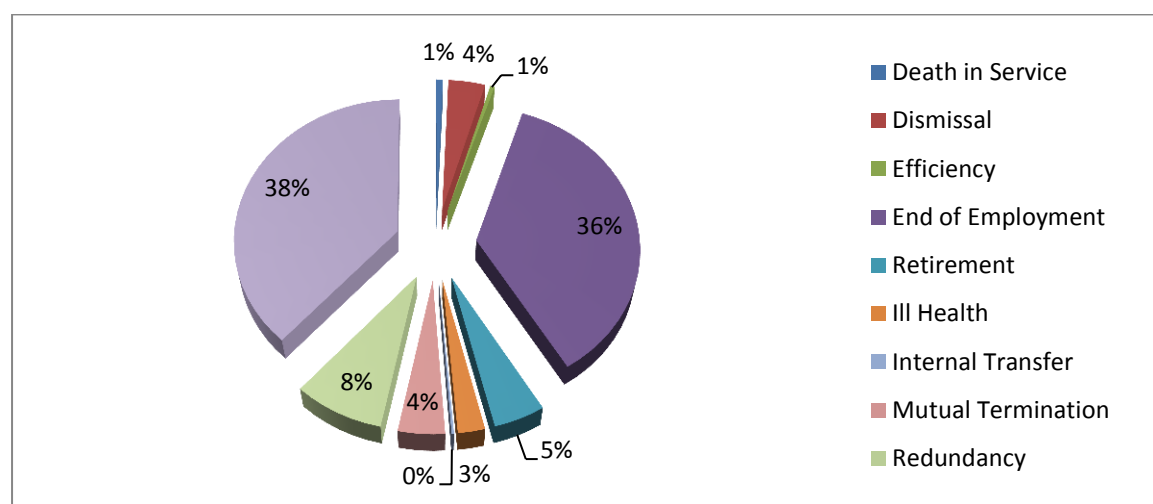
⁸ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-109-the-gender-pay-gap.pdf>

There are no evident themes in the data for other protected characteristics which would suggest higher proportion of leavers in one group over another, including disabled leavers where 95% were not disabled, and ethnicity, however 12% of leavers' ethnicity is unknown.

Leavers by Contract: The majority of the 438 leavers were employed on a permanent contract (225) which accounts for 51% of leavers. Those on a relief contract (95) accounted for 22% of leavers within the annual period, and similarly those on a temporary contract (61) accounted for 14% of leavers, with an additional 13% of employees leaving the authority employed on a fixed term contract.

Given the baseline gender split, and drawing comparisons to leaver information by contract type, there are no significant inconsistencies evident however there is a slight inconsistency in the gender split for those employed on temporary contracts and those on fixed-term contracts. There were slightly more female leavers on temporary contracts with 78% of leavers and more male leavers on fixed-term contracts (35%) compared to female leavers (65%). In addition, 34% of leavers were full-time employed and 66% were employed part-time. There were significantly more female leavers employed on part-time contracts (83%) than males (17%) however almost as many male full-time employed employees left (58%) than female employees (42%).

Highest leavers by grade and reason: Reasons for leaving the authority were varied with the two primary reasons for leaving include 'end of employment' and 'voluntary resignation'. Those who left the authority due to voluntary resignation accounted for 168 leavers (38%). which includes end of relief employment; end of fixed term employment and end of temporary employment' accounting for 159 (36%) of leavers.



Applicants

During the annual period there were on average 1967 applicants. Data for applicants is presented as average due to the differentiation of responses for each equality question; therefore responses to some questions during the application stage fluctuate. During the application process, equal opportunities questions are presented however apart from questions on disability, all other equality specific questions are non-mandatory which presents difficulties in consistency of the information presented at this stage. Nevertheless, applicant data between 31st March 2017 and 1st April 2018 has presented the following information by protected characteristic:

Applicants by Gender: The majority of applicants during the annual period were female (75.5%) compared to 24.3% of male applicants. Less than 1% of applicants for Council positions were either Transgender, or selected 'other' as their gender. This remains consistent with the current baseline gender split within the Council which is currently at 76% female employees compared to 24% of male employees.

Applicants by Age: The majority of people who applied for a Council position within the annual period were aged between 18-24 (26%), and 25-34 (35%), yet these age groups account for around 24% of the overall workforce.

Applicants by Race / Ethnicity: White and British applicants accounted for 94% of the overall applications made for Council positions during the annual period. It is interesting to note that data on applicants demonstrates that all applicants responded to this question whereas workforce data shows that (12%) of employees chose not to disclose their ethnicity. An additional 5.6% of applicants stated 'other' race and ethnic backgrounds other than White and British.

Applicants by Religion: The highest proportion of applicants, when asked about their religious and belief, stated that they had 'no religion' (62%) or 'Christianity'. 3% of applicants belong to other religious groups and an additional 1.1% of applicant's religion was not known.

Applicants by Disability: A total of 47 applicants identified themselves as 'disabled' which is slightly higher than the amount of current employees with a disclosed disability (41). The Authority identified 14 Leaver with a disclosed disability (14).

Applicants by Sexual Orientation: The majority of applicants during the annual period stated their sexuality as 'heterosexual' (92%). A total of 76 applicants disclosed their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) which is considerably higher than the 1% (31) of employees. A further 1% chose 'other' when asked about their sexual orientation.

Applicants by Marriage and Civil Partnership: 50% of applicants considered their marital status as 'single' with a further 36% of applicants stating that they were married or in a civil partnership. A high proportion of applicants stated that their marital status as 'other' (9%).

Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average earnings between women and men. The UK gender pay gap is just over 18% (2018).

At Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council we are confident that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs across the business. The gender pay gap at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council shows that the workforce is predominantly female with women occupying a high percentage of jobs across all four pay quartiles. The pay gap in Blaenau Gwent is significantly lower than the national average and has further improved reducing from 7.06% at the lower (mean).

The Gender Pay Gap information required under the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 is presented and published through the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2018/19⁹.

⁹ https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/images/Council/Policies_Strategies_Plans/Pay_Policy_Statement_2018-2019.pdf

Chapter 4 - Progress on Blaenau Gwent's Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020

A statement on the effectiveness of the steps the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives:

This chapter fulfils regulation 16(2)(d) of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which requires us to report on the progress we have made to fulfil each our equality objectives. It is retrospective and covers the financial year 2017 – 2018, which is year two of the Blaenau Gwent Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020. The Strategic Equality Plan identified the below four Equality Objectives each with a detailed action plan.

Blaenau Gwent's strategic equality objectives for 2016 – 2020 are:

1. Make equality vital in decision making and service provision
2. Be an equal opportunity employer, with a workforce that is aware of and understands the equality agenda
3. Do our best to engage, support and protect those people in our community that need it the most
4. Promote understanding and acceptance of diversity within our communities

Each equality objective introduced a number of subsequent actions to help achieve equality and diversity across the organisation and within the wider community. The updates below are only some of the key achievements realised during the reporting period.

Objective 1 – Make equality vital in decision making and service provision

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments continue to be mainstreamed across the Council business planning, reporting, decision-making, policy-making, service-reviews and on all financial efficiency proposals. The Policy team provides advice and support to all departments in the effective use and application of the EQiAs.

Elected Member Training and Equality Champion Role

In 2017, a new Council was elected in Blaenau Gwent. All members within the new administration are subject to ongoing training and development to increase their understanding of the many elements associated to their role as Councillor.

Equalities training is a fundamental part of their development programme and two awareness raising sessions were delivered in July 2017 and October 2017, attended by 76% of elected members (32). The contents of the training covered the principles of the Equality Act 2010, the general and specific duties as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the protected characteristics and issues around discrimination. Following the training supplementary supporting material was provided to members as reference material.

Procurement and Commissioning

Established through the Council's Corporate Equality Network, the Procurement working group has set out a number of priorities which will attempt to review and improve the way in which the Council carries out its procurement functions. Procurement is a 'Specific Duty' for Wales under the PSED, requiring the principles of equality to be embedded in to the procurement framework and subsequent commissioning activities.

At present Blaenau Gwent Council's Procurement functions utilise the Welsh Government's generic SqUID (Supplier Qualification Information Database) template to ensure equality considerations are built in to the procurement process. However we recognise that increased consideration need to be given to equalities following relevance and proportionality checks, when considering and awarding contracts. Since the development of the working group, the procurement framework and in particular, the **Contract Procedure Rules** (CPR) document has been amended to outline the equality requirements and expectations during the tender and award processes.

The members of the working group are currently developing an equalities and sustainability risk assessment checklist which can be applied at different stages of the procurement and commissioning processes, which will determine the appropriate weight that must be given to equalities as a requirement in the pre-tendering, tendering and contract management process.

Further the working group are exploring equality considerations in line with the principles of the ***Community Benefits Strategy***, as well as the commitment expectations set out in the ***Code of Practice for Ethical Employment in Supply Chains***.

Objective 2 – Be an equal opportunity employer, with a workforce that is aware of, and understands the equality agenda

Staff Training

Within the 2017 to 2018 period, equality training was delivered to Council staff which covered a range of protected characteristics, these sessions included:

Training Session Title	Date	Attendees
Equality Act 2010 (Education)	February 2018	13
Equality Act 2010 (Environment & Regeneration)	February 2018	15
Equality Act 2010 (Resources)	February 2018	9
Sexual Orientation x 2 Sessions	February 2018	15
Equality Act 2010 (Corporate Services)	March 2018	11
Gender Identity x 2 Sessions	March 2018	24
Race Equality x 2 Sessions	March 2018	24
Additional Sexual Orientation Session	March 2018	8
Total		130

In total, 11 training sessions were offered to Council employees, all of which specifically covered equality issues which were considered priority issues. 130 employees attended the training sessions, each of which offered a maximum of 15 spaces which is a 79% attendance rate. All staff who applied for any of the training sessions offered were accepted, there were no instances where employees were refused training attendance.

Workforce Development Programme: The Social Services Workforce development programme operates on a Service Level Agreement with Caerphilly Council. A range of training is offered to Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent social services staff. The breadth of courses can be found by following the link: <http://socialservicesblaenau-gwent.caerphilly.gov.uk/>

Training Data by Protected Characteristic: During the equalities training sessions listed in the Appendix, participants were asked to complete equal opportunities form with the view of monitoring attendance of training from an equalities perspective. However it is recognised that this equalities monitoring is not used when providing training to staff in 'other departments', therefore any data represented by protected characteristic in this section of the report is specific to a set of equality focused training sessions only. Some key findings from the data analysis process during training equalities monitoring:

- Not all participants felt comfortable completing some questions within the monitoring form, and in some instances, left questions blank.
- Consistent with organisational data on employees, employees are reluctant to disclose their sexual orientation when asked during monitoring processes.
- Similarly, people are reluctant to disclose their religion or belief with 16% of respondents not disclosing, with a further 55% of attendees indicating that they have no religion or belief.
- The highest age brackets of training attendees are between 26-39 (37%) and 40-49 (32%) the lowest age group is 16-25 (6%).
- The majority of attendees do not consider themselves disabled (85%), with a further 12% not disclosing their disability status, and only 5% indicating that they are disabled.

Joint Workforce Development Training: Within the annual period, a number of training sessions were provided to social services staff through the joint Workforce Development programme. Various training sessions are provided to social services staff to increase their skills and awareness of key areas of social care, and many of the sessions delivered are specific to equality issues.

A full table of equalities specific training can be found in the Appendix, courses such as Autism awareness; Supporting People with a Learning Disability who Self-Harm; Hate Crime and an Introduction to Working with People with a Learning Disability.

Between May 2017 and February 2018, 14 courses were delivered to social services staff where there was relevance to equalities, 157 employees attended this training with around 30% of attendees employed by Blaenau Gwent Council.

Information relating to attendees equality information is currently unavailable through the workforce development programme however this has been identified as a data development need. Sufficient support will be provided to the Workforce Development team to increase recording and monitoring of equality information of training attendees.

Workplace Policy Review

Each year, workplace policies as well as relevant external policies are reviewed to ensure the policy remains up-to-date and relevant. An equality impact assessment screening process is carried out during each policy review process to assess the level of impact the policy, or changes to the policy is likely to have on protected groups.

During the 2017 to 2018 annual reporting period, a number of policies were reviewed, and from a workplace perspective these included, the Council's Dignity at Work Policy; the Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women and Sexual Violence Policy, the Recruitment Charter and Code of Practice, the Whistleblowing Policy as well as the Corporate Induction Process.

During the annual period, the Council's Waste and Recycling policies have been under review following on from the implementation of recent changes to the waste and recycling processes the year prior. Through the consultation process and implementation of the Policy, feedback from residents highlighted some unintended consequences, which led to a review of the policy, changes to working practices and some reasonable adjustments to the services for those service users with a disclosed disability.

Objective 3 – Do our best to engage, protect and support those people in our community that need it the most

Engagement with the Local Community

The Council's Engagement team formulated an action plan as part of the ongoing engagement process. The action plan was aimed at engaging directly with protected groups across the community. Phase 3 of the consultation process introduced an improvement plan to build on the good work undertaken to improve engagement with these groups, examples of consultation undertaken include groups such as:

- Disability groups, including the Access 4 All forum
- The Buddhist Community
- The Gypsy Traveller Community
- LGBT groups
- Pregnancy and Maternity Groups
- Armed Forces support networks
- Welsh Language Groups
- Children and Young People's networks

Over 1,000 people provided a total of 2,369 comments which contributed to the overall wellbeing planning process. Some key findings from the Blaenau Gwent We Want consultation and engagement process, which has been featured within the Wellbeing Plan:

- People recognise that giving children the best start in life was a key challenge that needed specific support and investment. Early years support and investment was recognised as a key priority throughout the consultation process and has been transferred in to the plan.
- Issues with transport and transport links, specifically a lack of availability of transport were identified as a further key priority in the feedback process. In particular, people felt that the inherent lack of transport in the area was a contributing factor to the issue of isolation, which was a further theme identified as part of the consultation and engagement process.
- Poor mental health was a further issue highlighted within the process. People felt that high levels of depression and anxiety were contributing factors to the overall issue of poor mental health.

These comments and the feedback provided by residents were evaluated and were used to inform the development of the current local wellbeing plan. This engagement approach effectively **fosters good relations** between protected groups, with the view of **advancing the principles of equality** through the valuable feedback provided in the design and implementation of our core services, demonstrated through our equality impact assessments, the development of our Strategic Equality Plan and the recently published local Wellbeing Plan.

Hate Crime

The EHRC's 2015 'Is Wales Fairer' report highlighted that in Wales, 7% of adults aged 16 and over reported experiencing discrimination, harassment or abuse in the previous twelve months. This was higher in some groups more than others including 1 in 5 reported by ethnic minority groups; 1 in 5 from a religious minority; 1 in 10 young people and 1 in 10 disabled people.

Local hate crime data is recorded by Police and Victim Support. Between April and September 2017 there were 39 hate crime incidences in the Blaenau Gwent area. These incidences were categorised as the following, Disability (5 incidences); Anti-Social Behaviour (4 incidences); Homophobic / Sexual Orientation (6 incidences); Race/Nationality (17 incidences); Cyber Crime (2 incidences); other (2 incidences).

Reducing hate crime is a priority within the Council's community safety department and has been identified as a key challenge within the EHRC 'Is Wales Fairer' report. The report sets out a key challenge and additional priorities around the 'Elimination of violence, abuse and harassment in the community' particularly against women, disabled people, ethnic minority people, Muslim people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

The Council's Community Safety Team takes a structured approach to dealing with any identity-based incidences it is notified of within the community, working in collaboration with relevant policing and cohesion representatives.

Identity-Based Bullying in Schools

The Council is taking necessary action to actively address the issue of identity-based bullying across Blaenau Gwent Schools. Identity-based bullying is a priority area outlined in both the Equality and Human Rights Commission Forward Work Plan, and is outlined in Estyn's 2014 review 'Action on Bullying'.

An identity-based bullying working group currently operates as part of the Council's Corporate Equality Network and is supported by relevant Council representatives who are collectively reviewing the effectiveness of the action taken by schools to address bullying on the grounds of a pupil's protected characteristic.

The CEN working group is supporting Education to improve how we recognise, record and also monitor any bullying or conflict incidences in schools, which are reflective of a pupil's protected characteristic. During the annual period, the working group has addressed this issue through the development of a 'Behaviour Management Model' via individual school's SIMs system which has been created in a way which captures incidences relevant to each protected characteristic.

The screenshot shows a web-based form titled 'Details' for recording a bullying incident. The form includes the following fields and options:

- Type:** A dropdown menu set to 'Bullying Incident'.
- Type Of Bullying:** A dropdown menu with a list of options: Cyberbullying, Racist Bullying, Homophobic Bullying, SEN/Disabilities, Appearance and Body Image, Sexist/Sexual Bullying, Looked after children/Young Carer, Gender Difference, Health, Religious/Cultural, Financial Deprivation, and Clash of Personality. A red arrow points to this dropdown.
- Additional Types:** A text input field.
- Points Defined:** A text input field with the value '1'.
- Activity:** A text input field.
- Date:** A text input field.
- Location:** A dropdown menu.
- Time:** A dropdown menu.
- Comments:** A large text area for notes.
- Recorded On:** A date field showing '05/01/2017'.
- Recorded By:** A text field showing 'Mrs Gillian Grosvenor'.
- Status:** A dropdown menu.
- Buttons:** 'New' and 'Delete' buttons are visible on the right side.

When a bullying or conflict incident occurs in the school, those in charge of data entry will be responsible for inputting the details of each incident, and will be expected to categorise under the relevant protected characteristic. There are a number of additional features included in this process, including the ability to detail the date and time in which the incident took place, the location of the incident, the role of the students involved, as well as a number of other relevant factors relating to the incident. These additional recording aspects will allow the school to effectively monitor any trends in bullying behaviour within the school, and in some cases can predict behaviour patterns of students and therefore prevent future bullying incidences.

Success so far is observed through the engagement with Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community (EFLC), who is currently using this system to record identity-based bullying and other behavioural incidences via their SIMs system. In the upcoming school term Ebbw Far Learning Community will pilot the first phase implementation across their cluster to explore the potential success of this proposal, and to identify significant areas of improvement prior to full implementation across the authority.

This project will attempt to contribute to one of the priorities highlighted in the key challenges summary document identified following the 'Is Wales Fairer' review. In particular, the proposed behaviour management model will seek to contribute to the key challenge in relation to 'closing the attainment gap in education' by reducing incidences of bullying in school.

Ebbw Fawr Learning Community (EFLC)

EFLC stands against all forms of discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability or ability. EFLC has a robust anti-bullying strategy which focuses on the use of anti-bullying ambassadors (ABA) in all year groups.

The ABAs are a trained group of young people who support and monitor vulnerable pupils. Daily they offer a 'safe space' for young people to attend at break and lunch if they are feeling vulnerable and are highly visible as they wear an identifiable EFLC blue ABA hoodie. Each day the ABAs promote their scheme by popping into registration classes at KS3 to develop relationships with younger learners and monitor any concerns.

They are actively involved in taking assemblies and fund-raising events, including recently receiving a grant from GAVO to develop their mission further.

Outside of Ebbw Fawr, our ABAs mission continues. Every year the ABAs train Year 6 pupils in all of our feeder primary schools, and have recently started to train other comprehensive schools in our anti-bullying scheme, including the risks of on-line bullying which they have received extra training on from the Diana Award.

The school also has robust systems in place to actively identify, record, manage and monitor the frequency and nature of hate incidents, hate crime, discrimination, bullying or harassment using the SIMS system. This allows us to monitor the data to identify disparities against these characteristics, and the possible causes. It also allows us to target remedial action effectively. We now have fewer logged incidences on SIMS and our pupil surveys now show that nearly all learners now state that they feel safe at school.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The Council's Policy Team Leader is the Chair of the regional Gwent Anti-Slavery Group. In this way the Council continues to support the policy and practice development in the field of this heinous crime.

The work of the multi-agency Group ensures victims and survivors are safeguarded, offenders are robustly pursued and brought to justice, and learning is shared to strengthen policy and practice. In March 2018 Blaenau Gwent Council supported the development, production and translation of the first Wales first Policy Briefing on Modern Slavery.



<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/Modern%20Slavery%20Policy%20Briefing%20March%202018%20-%20English.pdf>

Students eligible for free school meals and those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (eFSM/ ACEs)

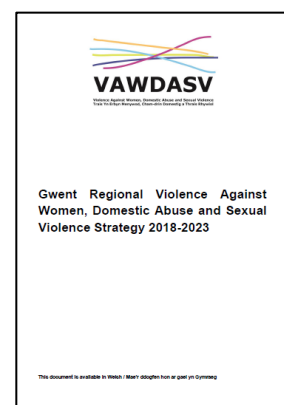
The school works hard to actively close gaps in attainment and achievement; especially students eligible for free-school meals (eFSM), students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, students from minority ethnic groups and those who have had adverse childhood experiences. For example, in addition to extra academic support, eFSM students in Year 10 and Year 11 are given the opportunity to meet termly with Coleg Gwent in a mentoring capacity to try and raise aspirations and ensure that they have an exit strategy when they leave school.

EFLC is also a pilot school for ACEs, and subsequently has received bespoke training to become a trauma informed school. In addition to this training, we have put a programme together where all children with high numbers of ACEs are identified to Families First and INSPIRE and offered additional support.

The programme also identifies vulnerable children in Year 10 who would benefit from being mentored. These ACE mentors become their trusted adult, an adult who they can turn to if in need of additional support in or out of school. They also receive priority access to the school nurses, counsellor and other agencies.

Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are fundamental breaches of human rights, a consequence of the inequality between victims and perpetrators, where power and control is used in a way that damages lives, futures and the futures of people around those subjected to the actions of perpetrators.



Every year lives are damaged needlessly in Wales, all forms of violence and abuse are unacceptable. Anyone who experiences violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence deserves an effective and timely response from all public services.

Blaenau Gwent Council has strategic representation on the Gwent Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership Board, which published its first joint strategy 2018-2023. The strategy aims to tackle VAWDASV by supporting victims and survivors, tackling perpetrators, ensuring professionals have the tools and knowledge to act, increasing awareness of VAWDASV and the support available, and helping children and young people to understand inequality in relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

Education Transformation and Youth Service

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service provides a variety of opportunities and support to young people aged 11-25 years old. The service provides open access provision to all young people, and works around young people's individual circumstances to ensure they can be involved. This includes bespoke provisions and support for young people through welsh medium opportunities. This is provided through a funded partnership with the Urdd.

In addition, the service co-ordinates the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, which is a preventative approach to supporting young people who have various factors in their lives that make them more vulnerable. An Early Identification Tool is used to help identify young people, made up of mixed criteria of protected characteristics, life circumstances and concerns. These young people are offered support by the Youth Service through its various projects, including Inspire 2 Achieve and Work, Positive Futures and Counselling.

Types of support for these young people include support in and out of school around emotional health and wellbeing, behaviour, healthy relationships, social isolation and transition points. Alternative curriculum is offered to small cohorts of young people who are at risk of permanent exclusion and/or on the cusp of anti-social behaviour orders. Counselling is provided across all secondary schools and also within youth centres up to the age of 18. Additional counselling is offered to young people up to the age of 25 through the Inspire programmes.

Accessibility

Blaenau Gwent Council was recognised by the Children's Commissioner for Wales as being one of the only Council's in Wales to have a published Accessibility Strategy and action plan. The Blaenau Gwent Accessibility Strategy 2017-2020 and associated action plan are scheduled for review and consultation over the next year.

An Accessibility Forum has been developed in order to coordinate a review of both the strategy and action plan, whilst also ensuring that there are effective accessibility identification and management processes in place aligned to delivery. Facilities Management aspect of the Education Transformation team working closely with Technical Services, have and continue to embed accessibility into the facilities review, maintenance, condition and suitability processes.

21st Century Schools

Ystruth Primary School remodelling project took place between October 2017 and August 2018, the purpose of which was to ensure that the school environment is able to meet the changing needs of the pupil population and wider community, whilst improving the overall condition and suitability of the school. The project had a specific focus on the transformation of provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, whereby extensive remodelling works were undertaken within the resource bases. The project resulted in significant improvements to the learning environment for all pupils. The project is scheduled to commence in October 2017.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Blaenau Gwent's Local Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) was formally approved by Welsh Government in March 2018. Blaenau Gwent was the first and only Council within the SEWC region at the time, to have the plan approved with no further amendments. The strategic priorities highlighted in the draft WESP document for the next three years can be summarised as follows:

- Raise the profile and levels of participation for Welsh-medium education across the County Borough by 2020, to contribute to the vision for one million speakers by 2050.
- Increase the early year's provision offer to stimulate parental demand to enable growth across the County Borough.
- Increase transition rates from Welsh-medium nursery provision to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg by 50% in 2020.
- Work regionally with South East Wales Local Authorities to secure places for Blaenau Gwent learners in Welsh-medium secondary provision between 2017-2020 and beyond.
- Improving Welsh medium learner outcomes by 2020 so that learners raise aspirations and improve their life chances.

Objective 4 – Promote understanding and acceptance of diversity within our communities

Access 4 All Forum/Disability and 50+ Forum

During the 2017 – 2018 reporting period, both the 50+ Network and the local Access 4 All disability network collaborated on two occasions to discuss similar issues faced by forum members. An event was held in January 2018 presented as ‘Know Your Rights’ giving 50+ and Access 4 All members information on their rights around pensions, benefits and Welfare Reform.

Know your Rights (January 2018): The Access 4 All forum and 50+ Network collaborated in January 2018 to take part in a joint forum discussion on issues which affect both cohorts.

The event ‘Know your Rights’ took part in Tabor Chapel, Brynmawr and was the first collaboration event between each forum. Councillor John Mason, the Older Person’s Champion, opened the event outlining the main theme of the discussions, and introduced the two key guest speakers including Jan Channing from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Celia Jones and Sue Jarman from the Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) Campaign.



Blaenau Gwent 50+ Forum and Access 4 All
Invite you to...

**Know your rights:
Pensions, Benefits and
Welfare Reform**

At Tabor Chapel, Brynmawr
Davies Street, Brynmawr. NP23 4AD
Thursday 18th January 2018
at 10:00am - 1:00pm

Speakers and discussions on:
Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI), Welfare Reform, Universal Credit, Citizens Advice Bureau and more.

This event is primarily aimed at members of the public.
Please RSVP to ppw@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk or call 01495 357722 and let us know of any special requirements (i.e. visual or auditory) you have.
Transport is available on request. Lunch is provided.

Jan Channing from CAB provided an overview to forum members of upcoming Welfare Reform changes, specifically in relation to the roll out of Universal Credit due to take effect in Blaenau Gwent in July 2018. Universal Credit is the most fundamental reform of welfare since its inception. The presentation detailed the features of Universal Credit, providing information and support details for those who wish to know more, followed by an open discussion and any specific questions.

A presentation was then delivered by Sue Jarman and Celia Jones around the WASPI campaign (Women Against State Pension Inequality). The WASPI group, established in 2015, campaigns against the way in which the state pension age for men and women was equalised. Information on these changes were provided and a discussion was opened up around pension access.

International Women's Day 2018: This year's International Women's Day, which is celebrated annually on March 8th, marked the Centenary for Women's Suffragette movement, and to mark this milestone achievement for women, Blaenau Gwent hosted a local celebration event. The event was held in the General Offices over two hours with invites circulated widely to local women's institutes, local business owners, school ambassadors, Council and Third sector officers as well as local community members.



The event was well attended, having student representatives from Ebbw Fawr Learning Community. The event provided a structured conference style agenda with three guest speakers including the newly appointed Council's Managing Director, Michelle Morris who also led the event, Faye Walker a Committee member for the EHRC who discussed the role of the EHRC and provided a brief history of the Suffragette movement, as well as Elizabeth Sullivan MBE who shared her experiences of the ongoing 'Think Pink' charity work she has done over the years for Breast Cancer Research and her experiences as a local female business owner.

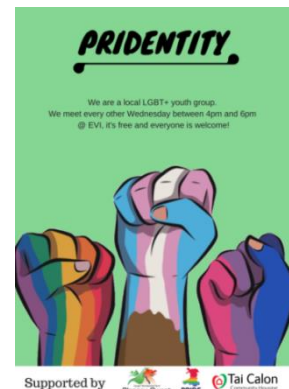
During the event, attendees were also invited to view two displays one of which provided a chronological illustration of the progress toward women's rights since 1883 and the introduction of the Women's Guild, until the present day. A second display presented some of the most inspirational women over the past 100 years outlining their contributions and achievements for women's rights. Some inspirational women included Emmeline Pankhurst, Florence Nightingale, Malala Yousafxai, Marie Curie, Rosa Parks and Princess Diana.



Feedback during the event included; 'stronger focus for education around equal rights', 'increasing engagement and promoting the participation of women in their communities', and 'more support and encouragement for women to achieve their goals'. Since the event, some of the attendees have collaborated to put in place plans for celebration of International Women's Day 2019, which will receive ongoing support from the Council.

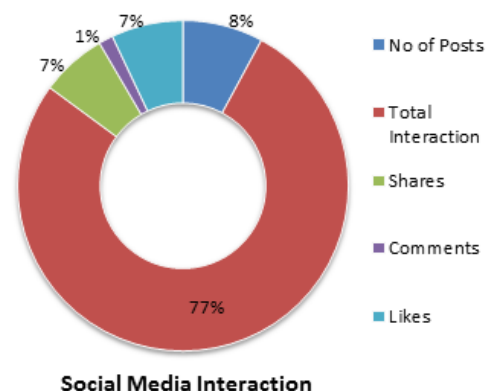
LGBT+ Support Group: A specific area of equalities which has been recognised as a priority in recent annual reports is to increase engagement and support for the LGBT+ community. Blaenau Gwent Council has engaged with Coleg Gwent and a young person's LGBT+ forum in a secondary phase school to identify ways in which the Council can improve the services offered to marginalised and vulnerable groups in the local area. These groups of students meet twice weekly and celebrate being LGBTQ+ by taking assemblies and promoting their identity around the school.

As a result, Blaenau Gwent Council has collaborated with Tai Calon, a local registered social landlord, as well as Pride Cymru to work with the young person's LGBT+ community to develop a local LGBT+ Social Group. This network, which young people have named 'Pridentity' exists as a self-sustained social group through which young people regularly meet to discuss ways in which to improve visibility of the LGBT+ community across Blaenau Gwent. This network seeks to improve the engagement and the confidence of young people who either identify with the LGBT+ community, or who are allies of the community.



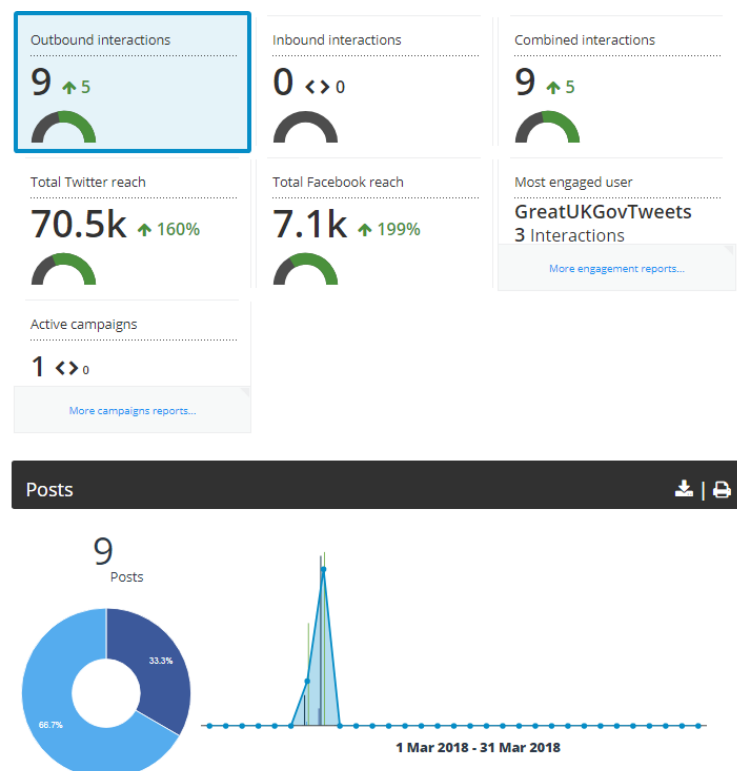
Social Media Campaigns

The Council's Communications team supports in the promotion of key local and national events through an equalities campaign set up in October 2017. Between October 2017 and March 2018 a number of equalities specific events were promoted through the Council's social media platforms. Between October 2017 and March 2018, 12 equalities specific posts were published on the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages, these posts received 1311 views/clicks.



An example of the social media activity during this period includes firstly, the promotion of National Hate Crime Awareness Week (October 2017). These posts were promoted in line with the National #WeStandTogether campaign, which aims to promote community cohesion. The post received 28 views, with a total of 11 interactions via Facebook, with a further 52,900 potential reach via Twitter.

The social media campaign which received the most reach during the annual period was in support of International Women's Day, which was celebrated in Blaenau Gwent on the 8th March 2018. Blaenau Gwent Council led on a celebratory event to mark the centenary of women's suffrage, during which six Twitter and three Facebook posts were sent out. This was the most successful event in terms of social media reach during the annual period, with 143 interactions.



The above infographic represents the overall combined interaction of the 12 social media posts relating to equalities published between October 2017 and March 2018. The potential reach via both Facebook and Twitter demonstrates the potential for social media to contribute to providing understanding and awareness of equalities related issues and activities to the wider community. Social media platforms will continue to be utilised effectively to promote understanding, diversity and acceptance within our communities and the data provided through these interactions will provide a platform through which improvements in this area can be made.

A Case Study - Ystruth Primary School

Inclusion

Ystruth Primary School is an inclusive school. All children in the school including those with ALN have equal access to both the Foundation Phase Curriculum and the National Curriculum. Within every class there will be children with a wide range of abilities and adults work very hard to prepare work and work in specified ways to meet the varying needs of these pupils. We are committed to working in partnership with parents, pupils and other outside agencies so providing the best possible education for all children whatever their needs may be. This includes very talented and able children, who may also require additional support.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. Pupil voice is a strong feature of the work of our school. As such; the School Council has an important role in helping the; Headteacher, staff and Governors consider the views and recommendations made by all pupils to guide the strategic direction of the school. The contribution of the School Council to the school community is greatly valued.

Race Relations

The school has a policy which ensures all persons are treated fairly and equally irrespective of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The school has been engaged in the 'Show Racism the Red Card' workshops and we have achieved The Rights Respecting Schools Level 2 Award.

As a Rights Respecting School we actively teach our pupils that they have a right to be safe and it is their responsibility to look after their own safety and the safety of others. In order to keep safe we provide opportunities for the pupils to consider their; safety on the roads, safety on the railways, safety with electricity, safety on building sites, the danger of "strangers" and internet safety. Throughout the year we will be; preparing lessons, inviting visiting speakers and showing films and videos all aiming to highlight these dangers and to encourage children to manage their own safety. We shall also provide pupils with information of what they could do if they do not feel safe.

A Case Study - Blaen –y- cwm Primary School

During the year Blaen-y-Cwm Primary school was inspected by Estyn. In the report Estyn identified the school has having excellent practice for Care support and guidance and below is an extract from the report

“The school’s strong focus on children’s rights and issues relating to equality and diversity ensures that pupils develop the values of tolerance and respect well. For example, the school is a ‘Dementia Friendly’ school and Year 6 pupils visit a local care home to take part in activities with the older generation. This strengthens the school’s links with the community and improves pupils’ social and emotional skills. Many activities support pupils’ spiritual development effectively. For example, pupils reflect with empathy in assemblies on their own beliefs and the importance of respecting difference.”

A Case Study - Rhos y Fedwen Primary School

At Rhos y Fedwen we believe that if school, families and the wider community work together in equal partnership we can all succeed. We know that we cannot improve the attainment and wellbeing of our learners in isolation. Our work is underpinned by our core values of respect, aspiration and – vitally – equality and equity. As with most things we do, at Rhos y Fedwen we approach equality through welcoming and developing meaningful collaboration with our families and community partners.

In working towards a more equal Wales we aim to engage with and support the most vulnerable in our school community. Although a largely monocultural school, we are lucky that some of our families and community partners have contributed to cultural workshops which reflect the heritage of our learners – haka and tribal body art from Samoa, Diwali celebration sweets and saris from India, Polish pickles and folktales, Portuguese dancing and of course an Eisteddfod and celebration of St Dwynwen’s Day.

One of the things we are currently most proud of in Rhos y Fedwen is our Intergenerational Project. We are all – staff, pupils and some parents – trained Dementia Friends. In partnership with United Welsh and volunteers, our learners have designed and started to build a dementia friendly garden. Our KS2 learners have developed relationships with community members living in a local care home through a Penpal scheme. Groups of Nursery children have weekly visits there to play games and sing songs with their new friends.

We have just received a donation from Blaenau Gwent Alzheimers Society to cover the cost of a bus for two terms so that we can establish an Intergenerational Choir with nearby older people sheltered housing community. For Remembrance Day, Y6 was invited to a workshop whereby they learned how to make ceramic poppies and in turn were invited to teach these skills to older people in the community. The skills and knowledge they developed that day were immeasurable.

A Case Study - School Senedd

Monitoring and promotion of the involvement of all groups of students, especially students with special educational needs and disabilities, in the extracurricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities, is highly important to us. As a school we have ensured that our recently established SENEDD consists of students from all groups, including ALN, LGBTQ+, EVE, WAC, and LRB to ensure that every group is represented and that all groups have a voice. Soon these students will receive training on chairing meetings, public speaking and campaigning with the help of Nick Smith MP.

In addition to our Senedd, we also have a large number of student right ambassadors. These ambassadors try to ensure that there is a strong sense of children's rights and responsibilities in our school regarding equality, diversity, Welsh Values & community cohesion. Currently, these Rights Ambassadors are busily helping to create their very own whole school rights' charter, using the voice of all of our students following training..

Appendix - Supporting Data Tables

Total & Gender	Total Staff	Male	%	Female	%
2017/2018	3028	716	24%	2312	76%
2016/2017	3457	827	24%	2360	76%

Age	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
16-24	164	5%	69	42%	95	58%
25-34	564	19%	104	18%	460	82%
35-44	729	24%	126	17%	603	83%
45-54	921	29%	216	23%	705	77%
55-64	574	19%	174	30%	400	70%
65+	76	4%	40	53%	36	47%

Considered Disabled	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Disabled	41	1.3%	14	34%	27	66%
Not Disabled	2533	83.7%	592	24%	1941	76%
Not Known	454	15%	110	24%	344	76%

Sexual Orientation	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Bisexual	15	<1%	2	<1%	13	<1%
Gay	7	<1%	7	<1%	0	0
Lesbian	9	<1%	0	0	9	<1%
LGB (total)	31	1%	9	1.2%	22	<1%
Not Known	792	26%	162	22.6%	631	27%
Heterosexual	2205	73%	545	76%	1659	72%

Ethnicity	Total	%	Male	Female
African	3	<1%	2	1
Other Mixed Background	2	<1%	0	2
Other White Background	14	<1%	3	11
White & Black Caribbean	1	<1%	0	1
British – E/NI/S/W	2631	87%	624	2007
Caribbean	2	<1%	0	2
Chinese	1	<1%	1	0
Did Not State	370	12%	85	285
Indian	2	<1%	0	2
Irish	1	<1%	0	1
White & Asian	1	<1%	1	0

Religion	Total	%	Male	Female
Any Other Religion	20	<1%	8	12
Buddhism	5	<1%	2	3
Christianity	1212	40%	273	939
Not Known	475	16%	107	368
None	1314	43%	326	988
Islam	2	<1%	0	2

Marital Status	Total	%	Male	Female
Civil Partnership	49	1.6%	12	37
Not Known	154	5%	43	112
Divorced	143	4.7%	25	117
Married	1584	52.3%	387	1197
Other	116	3.8%	34	132
Separated	51	1.6%	10	41
Single	902	29.7%	228	674
Widowed	29	<1%	2	27

Job Pattern & Structure	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Fixed Term	222	7.3%	84	38%	138	62%
Permanent	2261	74.6%	516	23%	1745	77%
Permanent / FT Regs	40	1.3%	3	7.5%	37	92.5%
Relief	305	10%	80	26%	225	74%
Temporary	200	6.6%	33	16.5%	167	83.5%

Contractual Information						
Part-Time	1330	44%	515	38.7%	815	61.2%
Full-Time	1694	56%	200	12%	1494	88%
Job Share	4	<1%	1	<1%	3	<1%

Pay Grade by Gender	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Grade 1	215	7%	15	7%	200	93%
Grade 2	323	10.6%	26	8%	297	92%
Grade 3	429	14%	62	14%	367	86%
Grade 4	284	9.3%	115	40%	169	60%
Grade 5	591	19.5%	150	24%	451	76%
Grade 6	324	7.7%	53	23%	181	77%
Grade 7	98	3.2%	31	32%	67	68%
Grade 8	140	4.6%	42	30%	98	70%
Grade 9	91	3%	29	32%	62	68%
Grade 10	21	<1%	7	33%	14	67%
Grade 11	50	1.6%	19	38%	31	62%
JNC 1-5 & CO	31	1%	15	48%	16	52%

School Grades						
Teachers	386	12.7%	84	22%	302	78%
Supply Teachers	4	<1%	1	25%	2	75%
Scale A & B	5	<1%	1	20%	4	82%
HT 1-7 & Leadership	77	2.5%	29	38%	48	62%
Apprentice	49	1.6%	47	96%	2	4%

Leavers by Protected Characteristic

1. Age	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
15-24	54	12%	13	12%	41	13%
25-34	102	23.5%	23	19%	79	24%
35-44	64	15%	12	11%	57	17%
45-54	99	23%	33	30%	66	20%
55-64	96	22%	23	22%	73	22%
65+	18	4.5%	7	6%	11	4%

2. Marital Status						
Not Known	39	9%	11	10%	28	9%
Separated	25	6%	5	4.5%	20	6%
Single	163	37%	39	35%	124	38%
Married/CP	211	48%	56	50.5%	155	47%

3. Ethnicity						
Not Known	51	12%	15	13.5%	36	11%
Other Inc Mixed	6	1%	2	1.5%	4	1%
British (W,E,S,NI)	381	87%	94	85%	287	88%

4. Sexual Orientation						
LGB	8	2%	3	2.5%	5	2%
Not Known	105	24%	22	20%	83	25%
PNS	17	4%	3	2.5%	14	4%
Heterosexual	308	70%	83	75%	225	69%

5. Religion						
No Religion	217	50%	61	55%	156	48%
Not Known	64	15%	16	14%	48	15%
Other	4	<1%	3	3%	1	<1%
Christianity	153	35%	31	28%	122	37%

6. Disability						
Disabled	14	3%	4	4%	10	3%
Not Disabled	416	95%	102	93%	312	95%
Not Known	8	2%	3	3%	5	2%

Applicants by Protected Characteristic		
Age Range	Number	%
Total Responses	1973	--
Under 18	26	1.3%
18-24	516	26.1%
25-34	694	35.1%
35-44	351	17.7%
45-54	297	15%
55-64	87	4.4%
65+	2	<1%
Gender	Number	%
Total Responses	1976	--
Male	481	24.3%
Female	1492	75.5%
Transgender	3	<1%
Race/Ethnicity	Number	%
Total Responses	1958	--
White British	1853	94.6%
Other	105	5.4%
Not Known	0	0%
Religion	Number	%
Total Responses	1935	--
No Religion	1199	62%
Christianity	655	34%
Other	58	3%
Not Known	23	1%
Disability	Number	%
Total Responses	2052	--
Not Disabled	1890	92.2%
Disabled	47	2.3%
Not Known	115	5.6%
Sexual Orientation	Number	%
Total Responses	1937	--
Heterosexual	1786	92%
LGB	76	4%
Other	20	3%
Not Known	55	1%
Marital Status	Number	%
Total Responses	1936	--
Single	962	49.6%
Married / CP	694	35.8%
Separated	117	6%
Other	163	8.9%

Training Data by Protected Characteristic		
Gender	Number	%
Male	31	26%
Female	79	68%
Not Known	7	6%
Sexual Orientation	Number	%
Heterosexual	93	80%
LGB	3	2.5%
Not Known	31	17.5%
Religion	Number	%
Christianity	34	29%
None	64	55%
Not Known	19	16%
Ethnicity	Number	%
White British	105	90%
Not Known	12	10%
Age	Number	%
16-25	7	6%
26-39	43	37%
40-49	38	32%
50-69	19	16%
Not Known	10	9%
Disability	Number	%
Disabled	3	3%
Not Disabled	100	85%
Not Known	14	12%
Marital Status	Number	%
Single	27	23%
Married	49	42%
Divorced	7	6%
Not Known	13	11%
Living with Partner	17	15%
Other	4	3%

Workforce Development Training – Social Services

Date	Course	Attendees
May 2017	Autism (An Introduction)	13
July 2017	Autism (An Introduction)	17
September 2017	Wales' Introduction to Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking	11
September 2017	Introduction to Working with People with a Learning Disability	16
September 2017	Medication Awareness for the treatment of Mental Health Problems	9
September 2017	Hate Crime	8
October 2017	Wales' Introduction to Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking	3
October 2017	Supporting People with a Learning Disability who Self Harm	10
November 2017	Medication Awareness for the Treatment of Mental Health Problems	10
November 2017	Autism (An Introduction)	8
November 2017	Wales' Introduction to Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking	12
December 2017	Autism (An Introduction)	15
January 2018	Supporting People with a Learning Disability who Self-Harm	10
February 2018	Autism (An Introduction)	10