

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON COUNCIL'S EQUALITY OBJECTIVES FOR 2016-2020

Cwm Taf Community Engagement Hub

As part of the consultation and engagement process on the Equality Objectives for 2016-2020 the Council used the Cwm Taf Community Engagement Hub, which gave residents, partners and other organisations the opportunity to have their say on the Objectives.

There were 45 respondents in total for the consultation, however not all of these completed all of the questions.

The following tables summarise the responses to the consultation:

Equalities Vision for Merthyr Tydfil:

“A place where diversity is valued and respected and everyone can participate, flourish and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential free from discrimination and prejudice.”

Question - To what level do you agree or disagree with this Vision?

(This question was answered by 45 respondents)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly agree	22	48.89%
Agree	15	33.33%
Disagree	5	11.11%
Strongly disagree	1	2.22%
Don't know	2	4.44%

If you agree with this vision, please say why:

- I am particularly interested in promoting equality and diversity for people with disabilities and those facing disadvantage.
- As everyone should be valued and respected no matter of race/religion/gender etc.
- Because everyone has the right to be shown respect.
- Clear and concise.
- Covers all of the Equality requirements.
- Everyone despite race, creed and colour deserve the same opportunities for advancement in life without prejudice.
- I think it fits in with every aspect, without bias.
- Equality is important.
- Everyone should be treated equally.
- Everyone should be respected regardless of their background and beliefs.
- It clearly sets out what we want Merthyr to be.

- It captures the essence of what the Local Authority should be setting out to achieve, to help make local communities a fairer and more inclusive place.
- It's a proper response to community needs.
- It is important that equality and diversity is reflected and, as it is enshrined in law, that issues affecting protected groups are given due consideration.
- It is important to recognise the dignity of each individual, and deal with each according to their needs.
- Reducing inequalities is an important vision to pursue.
- It's a broad objective with an ambitious, yet achievable outcome. Many divisions within the Council will be able to contribute to this, therefore aiding the mainstreaming of the Strategic Equality Plan.
- The reason I agree with this vision is because the Council should work more with the public and listen to the people of Merthyr Tydfil to see what can be improved. By doing this people in Merthyr will have greater faith in the Council.
- Merthyr has always prided itself on its diversity. Historically this is a town that has welcomed immigrants and has allowed them both to become integrated into the community and retain their individuality.
- There is a need to help people to achieve and thrive.
- Those from poorer economic backgrounds need to be supported to develop their own aspirations for life.

If you disagree with this vision, please say why and what you think should be changed:

- Where is the alignment with the goals in the future generations act - a more equal wales?

Theme: Community Engagement

Equality Objective 1

Put citizens' voices at the heart of local decision making so that their contribution is understood, recognised and used to help the Council understand and respond to the needs of its communities.

Question - To what level do you agree or disagree with this Equality Objective?

(This question was answered by 28 respondents)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly agree	11	39.29%
Agree	8	28.57%
Disagree	4	14.29%
Strongly disagree	2	7.14%
Don't know	3	10.71%

If you agree with this Equality Objective, please say why:

- This will ensure that people have a say in the services that they access.
- This will aid mainstreaming. Involving partner organisations is crucial - e.g. building on the good work being undertaken by MAGNET has to be a positive.
- It wholly reflects the approach that should be taken.
- As a trustee of VAMT I have been extremely impressed by the MAGNET project and believe it wholly reflects the approach that should be taken.
- As part of our job Community Engagement is crucial to our programme working. Community Involvement and active participation runs through all aspects of the work of our team. In saying that, community involvement needs to remain central to any work/vision within the community.
- Best way to design and deliver services that are efficient and effective.
- Citizens voices should be at the heart of decision making and methods should be in place to enable local authorities to hear the voices of all members of society regardless of their circumstances e.g. accessible information for people with disabilities.
- Community engagement can provide a strong basis for service delivery particularly in line with new legislation.
- Community engagement is paramount to deliver good public services.
- Community engagement is vital in delivering key services.
- I agree with the objective, I am concerned that Welsh speakers and learners voices may not be heard to the extent of others. The Magnet portfolio includes the POSSIB project which is a bilingual project. The other projects within the portfolio do not, as far as I am aware have capacity to cater for Welsh speaking input. Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful would be happy to support the Magnet projects with Welsh language input.
- Important to reach everyone especially isolated individuals and groups.
- Treats everyone fairly.

If you disagree with this Equality Objective, please say why and what you think should be changed:

- I disagree because as it stands, the objective is neither specific or measurable.
- I think this objective is already being addressed, under the Cwm Taf Consultation strategy so it is a duplication.
- The objective is very wordy and the objective isn't clear.
- To which protected characteristic does this refer? and how are you going to reduce the disproportionate impact?

Theme: Equality Awareness Raising

Equality Objective 2

To support and facilitate Equalities training and learning opportunities so that staff at all levels, Councillors and partners recognise and incorporate Equalities as part of their role.

Question - To what level do you agree or disagree with this Equality Objective?

(This question was answered by 23 respondents)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly agree	11	47.83%
Agree	6	26.09%
Disagree	3	13.04%
Strongly disagree	2	8.70%
Don't know	1	4.35%

If you agree with this Equality Objective, please say why:

- Enables the respects of individuals to be put into place.
- Equality training is essential to support communities and for a fair and equal organisation.
- Equality training is very important.
- It is important for all stakeholders to understand their responsibilities for Equality and setting out consistent standards that can be expected would ensure high levels for service users.
- It is very important that staff and elected members are aware of their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duties.
- Knowledge is power. The more people who are trained/know about it, will have a benefit towards the objective.
- Agree 100%.
- Necessary to mainstream Equality.
- There is a need for people to become self aware of their personal attitude towards equality and to raise awareness of equality issues in order to break down barriers to inequality.
- This objective would be useful for involving other partners and for promoting the message as much as possible.
- This relates to all staff and we need it promoted from all areas of the authority.
- Training and learning is essential in promoting Equality.
- Training will help identify where inequalities exist and how to tackle them.

If you disagree with this Equality Objective, please say why and what you think should be changed:

- Refinement to show how this would support better links with communities.
- This is specific and measurable, but is not, strictly speaking, an outcome objective. Rather, it is an objective to do with improving provision. This needs rewording to

show the link between equalities training and how it will remove or reduce inequalities to benefit the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act.

Theme: Understanding our Staff and Communities

Equality Objective 3

Develop robust monitoring systems to collect, collate, monitor and publish equalities data on our employees and customers, which will help the Council to ensure that it provides fair and accessible services.

Question - To what level do you agree or disagree with this Equality Objective?

(This question was answered by 23 respondents)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly agree	12	52.17%
Agree	4	17.39%
Disagree	3	13.04%
Strongly disagree	3	13.04%
Don't know	1	4.35%

If you agree with this Equality Objective, please say why:

- There is a need to gain knowledge and understanding of people and communities in terms of equality issues in order to respond to inequality positively.
- Data should be kept.
- Equality data is essential to understand and meet the needs of our community and staff.
- Equality monitoring is crucial to check systems work effectively and aid development and improvement.
- Essential for planning the right things.
- It is important that we know who are our service users and employees, so we can use our resources in the best way and ensure we are not discriminating against certain groups.
- It is vital that we have the ability to measure and benchmark our equality data in order to prioritise resources to under-represented groups effectively.
- It is vital to understand the make up of our staff and community.
- Robust data will help in service planning to better meet the needs of the community.
- The more knowledge you have about the community and the people living within it will benefit all services to that community. Strong working links and good verbal communication will also aid this.
- This is absolutely necessary.
- To be accountable to the community that your serve.
- Very important. All Local Authorities should have a good insight into their staff demographic.

If you disagree with this Equality Objective, please say why and what you think should be changed:

- This is not an equality objective because it makes no reference to correcting disproportionate negative effects experienced by those of identified protected characteristics.
- This is not an objective relating to improving outcomes for those protected characteristics listed in the Act. As it currently stands it is about improving provision. Not the same thing.

Theme: Gender/Equal Pay

Equality Objective 4

Ensure equity of pay across Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

To what level do you agree or disagree with this Equality Objective?

(This question was answered by 21 respondents)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly agree	12	57.14%
Agree	7	33.33%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	2	9.52%
Don't know	0	0%

If you agree with this Equality Objective, please say why:

- There should be no divide in relation to equal pay between genders.
- A continuation from the previous scheme, but this perhaps proves its importance.
- Common sense to ensure gender equality.
- Definitely need to have a gender pay objective, and adopting the living wage is good practice.
- We need equal pay for women.
- Equality in pay is fundamental to ensure MTCBC is a leading employer across Wales.
- Equity of pay is essential in the organisation.
- Essential part of Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Irrespective whether existing employees are encouraged to remain, there should be equality for jobs and services.
- Everyone should be entitled to the same pay as someone doing the same/similar job as them no matter their gender.
- Gender bias in relation to pay is a major barrier to progression and should be eliminated both where it is obvious and where it may be more stealthily applied.
- This is a vital objective for Merthyr to be a fair employer.
- To ensure operating in a legal manner.

- Totally agree. In 2016 the gender gap should not exist.

If you disagree with this Equality Objective, please say why and what you think should be changed:

- Objective needs rewording. It is not specific or measurable.