Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council



# Strategic Equality Plan 2012-2016

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# Foreword

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (the “Council”) is pleased to introduce its Strategic Equality Plan(SEP). The purpose of the Plan is to improve equal opportunities within our community in service delivery, employment, commissioning, leadership and working in partnership. The activities in the action plan clearly show our strong commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equal opportunities and good relations between people visiting, living and working in Merthyr Tydfil.

The Council has in recent years embarked on an ambitious improvement agenda which is transforming Merthyr Tydfil into a vibrant and thriving community. As a Council, we have a duty to tackle and challenge discrimination and disadvantage so that people feel safe from harassment and everyone has access to high quality services. The Strategic Equality Plan will help us to ensure that we focus on the positive outcomes for people in Merthyr Tydfil and that our services are accessible and delivered effectively and efficiently.

This Plan contains information about the action being taken to bring about this vision. The Council will use its leadership role to promote equality and diversity and share ideas and good practice with partners and other service providers. The Council welcomes everyone’s comments on this Plan and positively encourages feedback to help bring about improvement in the way the Council functions and provides services to the citizens of Merthyr Tydfil. We will continue to refine and develop our services, including respective monitoring systems, to help us gain a better understanding of our staff and the wider local communities and to enable us to meet everyone’s diverse needs.



Councillor Jeff Edwards
**Leader of MTCBC**



Gareth Chapman
**Chief Executive MTCBC**



# 1. Introduction

*Our vision is to strengthen our position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys, and be a place to be proud of where:*

- *People want to live, work and have a healthy fulfilled life*
- *People want to visit, enjoy and return*
- *People want to learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions*

***Vision for Merthyr Tydfil***
***Merthyr Tydfil Community Plan***

### 1.1 Background

The Council covers a wide geographical area. Merthyr Tydfil has a population of over 55,000. The Council employs around 3,000 people and as such is one of the largest employers in the local area. The Council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and social justice and we work to ensure that this is demonstrated in service delivery and in employment practices.

As part of the Council's commitment to all areas of equality, discrimination or harassment with regard to age, disability, gender including marital status, pregnancy, maternity and paternity, transgender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation including civil partnerships will not be tolerated. The Council will work to promote equality of opportunity for all who live, work or visit Merthyr Tydfil.

The council area includes a range of different communities and individual. Although statistical information is not available for all protected characteristics we have presented in Appendix 1 a profile of the council area based on available data from the 2001 Census and subsequent estimates with additional research provided derived from the "I AM Merthyr" Community Cohesion Strategy 2011. This will be updated following the publication of 2011 Census statistics.

The Council will pay due regard to the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 and subsequently the Welsh Language Measure 2011 in preparing a Welsh Language Scheme that demonstrates how we will treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality. This will remain separate from the Strategic Equality Plan.



### 1.2 Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan sets out:

- Its approach to equality and diversity in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil
- Its approach to equality and diversity to the workforce of the Council
- An Action Plan, shown in the appendix, indicates how the Council will manage, plan and mainstream equality and diversity in its day to day work.

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan will ensure that it focuses on the outcomes that matter to the community and people who use Council services; and that services are accessible and delivered effectively.

The Plan incorporates information, issues and potential areas for action in relation to all protected characteristics.

The Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan will set out the Council's equality objectives for the next four years. The progress of delivery of the objectives will be reported annually.

# 2. Public Sector Equality Duties

### 2.1 The General Duties

The majority of public authorities are covered by the general duty. These are listed in Part 2 of Schedule 19 of the Act as supplemented and amended by the Equality Act 2010 (Specification of Relevant Welsh Authorities) Order 2011.

- The general duty applies to private or third sector (voluntary and community) organisations where they are carrying out a public function on behalf of a public authority or in their own right. A public function is a function of a public nature as defined in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Public bodies are required 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.

This guidance refers to these three elements as the three 'aims' of the general duty and so when we discuss the general duty we mean all three aims.



The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Meeting the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others, as long as this does not contravene other provisions within the Act.

## 2.2 The Specific Duties

The specific duties require Public Bodies to:

- Publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually.
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

All information must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it.

## 2.3 Obligations

It is important for people throughout public bodies to be aware of the equality duty so that it is considered in their work where relevant. Examples may include:

- **Council's Elected members, the Chief Executive and Directors** – in how they set strategic direction, review performance and ensure good governance of the organisation
- **Senior managers** – in how they oversee the design, delivery, quality and effectiveness of the organisation's functions
- **Equality and diversity staff** – in how they raise awareness and build capacity about the general and specific duties within the organisation and how they support staff to deliver on their responsibilities
- **Human resources staff** – in how they build equality considerations into employment policies and procedures
- **Policy makers** – in how they build equality considerations into all stages of the policy making process including implementation, review and evaluation
- **Communications staff** – in how they ensure equality information is available and accessible
- **Analysts** – in how they support the organisation to understand the effect of its policies and practices on people from protected groups
- **Frontline staff** – in how they meet the needs of people from protected groups



- **Procurement and commissioning staff** – in how they build equality considerations into the organisation's relationships with suppliers
- **Partner Organisations** – In how they work with the Council to develop and implement policies and deliver services

### 2.4 Rights

The Act includes a new **Public Sector Equality Duty** (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

The new general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

It applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

## 3. Engagement Process

### 3.1 Who have we talked to?

Various consultation and engagement events have taken place across the County Borough. The events have aided the compilation of the strategies and plans which feed into this Strategic Equality Plan. The 'Community Conversation' Cohesion event was one of the main events for the collection of relevant information that has contributed to this plan.

The 'Community Conversation', which took place at the beginning of 2011 was commissioned by the Multi Agency Diversity Forum, this event saw more than 150 attendees from a range of communities of interest.

Although, many partnerships exist in Merthyr Tydfil and we have used the feedback form their engagement events to help inform this process. Other engagement events have involved Merthyr Tydfil and RCT Communities First officers, VAMT (Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil) and the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing forums.

### 3.2 What did they say?

During the compilation of the Community Cohesion Strategy1, many people told us, that Merthyr Tydfil and the geographic communities that form the County Borough are small communities, to which residents had a strong sense of attachment. In general people felt



that the communities of Merthyr Tydfil were welcoming and friendly towards new residents and that communities worked well. People told us that one of the positive aspects of living in small communities was that people knew one another, people looked out for each other and pulled together in times of need or crisis. This was a commonly held view across all groups of people we spoke to including new residents and people who have particular needs, e.g. people with disabilities.

However, we grouped what people told us into a number of broad themes, which are:

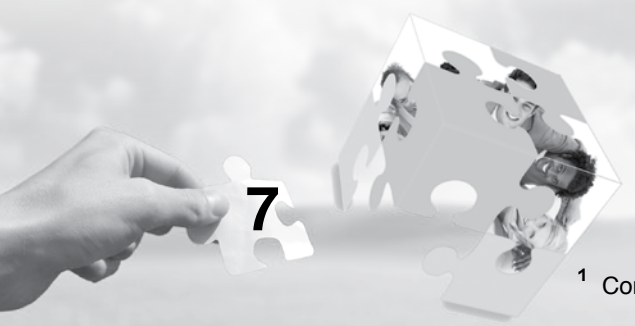
- lack of awareness and understanding of the needs of different groups of people, within both organisations and communities – this meant that the needs of some communities were ignored or not fully understood.
- structural issues such as unemployment, including the lack of employment opportunities in the area and high levels of economic inactivity which had created widespread disadvantage and a poverty of aspiration (people accept a life on benefits)
- organisational issues such as a lack of co-ordination of services, communication between agencies, communication between agencies and the community and policies adopted by agencies unintentionally contributing towards community tensions
- the often inflexible nature of services, the inflexible way in which they are delivered and the treatment of groups whose needs are different to the majority
- the failure of agencies to engage with a truly representative cross section of the community they work with
- the problem of hate crime
- an apparent lack of ownership and leadership in relation to equality and diversity matters

We also engaged with a range of different groups who reflected different communities of interest.

The following paragraphs summarise the views expressed by these groups.

**People with Physical Disabilities** – told us that there was a lack of awareness of their needs amongst the general population and within organisations. They told us that many buildings in Merthyr Tydfil were not accessible and more often than not, at times they were not consulted about the design of new facilities. This meant that their needs were often ignored. Where organisations had invested in specialist equipment to make their facilities more accessible, we were told staff were often not aware of how to use the equipment and the equipment was not serviced and in working order.

**Young People** – told us that there was a lack of employment opportunities in the area and that this meant that people who were living on benefits could not afford to participate in activities or use the new facilities at Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Village. Young people also told us





[1] Community Cohesion Strategy researched and compiled by Simon Inkson Ltd

that they felt discriminated against because of the attitudes of older people towards them. Young people also felt very strongly about the negative image of Merthyr Tydfil that has been promoted in the national media and felt that this was unfair and created problems for them, as this affected people's attitudes towards them.

**People with Mental Health Problems** – told us that by far the biggest issue they faced was one of stigma and discrimination fuelled by people not understanding the effects of mental health. They also valued counselling services, telephone support services, social activities and therapeutic interventions through art and music but felt these were not supported or resourced enough.

**Older People** – told us of their concerns about the behaviour of younger people in their communities and the fear that this caused for them at times. Older people also told us that the biggest problem that they experienced was the lack of public transport in the evenings and how this prevented them from participating in a range of activities.

**People who are Gay, Lesbian Bi-sexual or Transgender** - told us about the fear of disclosing their sexuality because of the risk of hate crime and family abandonment. This was compounded by the lack of support networks and the lack of symbols being displayed locally to evidence safe places that would be welcoming of their community. Education at all levels in the community was seen to be critical to challenge ignorance and this included festival style diversity events which promoted respect, openness and sharing.

**Gypsies and Travellers** – told us about, and showed us the poor physical conditions that Gypsy and Traveller families have to endure living on the only site available to them in Merthyr Tydfil, at Glyn Mil. They also told us that they felt ignored, in particular by the Council and treated as second class citizens.

**People who have a Learning Disability** - told us that people's lack of awareness of their needs caused problems for them and that people often 'saw the disability not the person'. They also told us about the lack of flexibility in relation to the delivery of support services and the difficulties they experience in influencing the delivery of services.

**People with Substance Misuse problems** – told us that the stigma of being regarded as a drug user or drinker meant that they were often targeted by the Police, discriminated against by employment agencies, and housed by social landlords in areas where there are many other people with similar problems. People with substance misuse problems also told us about the peer pressure they experience from other users when they are trying to stop using drink or drugs and the lack of diversionary activities available to them.



**Shop and restaurant owners from Minority Ethnic backgrounds** – told us that they had experienced problems. A small number of shop owners stated that they had been the target of race hate crimes, which had involved criminal damage. These shop owners told us that the response from all responsible agencies had not been good. Restaurant owners in the centre of town stated that the problems they experienced tended to occur late at night at the weekends. Shop owners and restaurant owners also told us that people referred to shop owners (predominantly of Indian heritage) and staff who worked in Indian restaurants (predominantly of Bangladeshi heritage) as 'Paki's' and that people's attitudes were unacceptable and still stuck in the 1970's.

**People who have moved to Merthyr Tydfil from overseas** – told us that Merthyr Tydfil was generally a friendly, welcoming place. However, a significant proportion of people who have moved to Merthyr Tydfil from other parts of the world told us of their experiences of hate crime, which tended to occur in one or two communities within the County Borough, and the failure of relevant agencies to address these problems. We were also told of the problems experienced by children of migrant workers who have moved to the Merthyr Tydfil area and the difficulties that may be encountered whilst at school which have a substantial proportion of children who speak English as a second language, often referred to as English as an Additional Language (EAL).

# 4. Relevant Information

Relevant Information (data) gathered at the various engagement events has been considered in the compilation of this SEP. At Appendix 2 we show further relevant information that has also been considered.

### 4.1 Identification and Collection

Other engagement events with VAMT (Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil,) Community First Partnership Offices and health establishments have also fed into the relevant information (data collection).

Wider engagement with the public and our partners included:

- face to face interviews and discussions with key stakeholders in key agencies (e.g. the Council, Police, Communities First Partnerships, schools)

- a questionnaire survey sent to all third sector organisations who work in Merthyr Tydfil

- discussions with members of a range of different community groups, (e.g. older people, people with disabilities, Gypsies and Travellers, groups of students learning English as Speakers of Other Languages, convenience store owners and restaurant/takeaway owners)



- a questionnaire survey distributed amongst the Polish and Portuguese communities.

### 4.2 Publishing Information

All Equalities policies, annual reports and action plans are reported to the Council's Executive Board, at the beginning of any consultation. Following the consultation period the document will then be submitted for approval to full Council. Approval will then allow the document to be shared with the public via the Internet and other sources.

## 5. Assessment of Impact

### 5.1 The Process

A new process for assessing the impact of decisions in relation to equalities has been adopted within MTCBC since 2010. This process is being further reviewed in order that the assessment of impact reports are more robust and evidence based. The process is continually being re-evaluated and reviewed in order to produce even more robust assessments. Reports/ policies/procedures may be amended as a result of the findings of an assessment of impact. Copies of the forms and guidance can be found on the Council's Intranet for staff use.

### 5.2 Publishing results

Any assessment which is found to have a substantial/likely impact on a protected characteristic will be published on the MTCBC Corporate Website, it will also appear within the Council's annual monitoring report in line with the current duties.

### 5.3 Monitoring

Monitoring of assessments are currently carried out by both the Head of HR & Equality and Equality Officer in consultation with the Councillor nominated Equality Champion, prior to being submitted, with a report to Council/Cabinet, for approval.

## 6. Employee Awareness

### 6.1 Knowledge & Understanding

A review of Equalities awareness training is currently being undertaken. Care staff have historically received effective training in this area. The Authority is rolling out a programme of equality training to all staff and Elected members. It is intended to provide equality training for employees on how to apply equality principles in their work and undertake relevant assessment of Impact.

A bilingual staff equality and diversity booklet will be developed and distributed to all staff by 31 March 2012.

A cross directorate Corporate Equality Working Group has been established. The group meets regularly to aid with mainstreaming equality for its employees. Ensuring staff are empowered to support service transformation and delivery.



### 6.2 Performance Assessment

The training will be tailored to the requirements of each team across the Council's directorates, their role within the organisation and the role of individual staff members. This will be in line with the current annual Personal Performance Development Plan (PPDP) process for each employee.

# 7. Equality Objectives

Equality objectives for this plan can be found at appendix 2.

The information available to us has been gathered from national research projects by the Equality and Human Rights Commission; from Wales Audit Office studies; from the Welsh Government, the Welsh Data Unit and the Office of National Statistics; and, from more local data provided by Estyn, local partnerships and our own services.

However, the most important source has been the wealth of information received through the various engagement activities that have taken place, including Have Your Say events, service review consultations, formal and informal meetings with local community groups, data gathered through surveys etc.

From initial considerations the following themes run through the information gathered to date:

- **Access to Information and Services**
- **Improve Reporting**
- **Promote Community Cohesion**
- **Engagement and Awareness**

There is a wealth of national evidence to support each of these goals, but there is clearly a need to focus and prioritise in order to make real progress. Additionally, there is a pressing need to acquire and learn from local evidence. Whilst there has been a great deal of progress in all of these areas there is much still to be done. These are neither exhaustive nor definitive. We will continue to examine the issues, in light of the comments received during the consultation period and work to develop meaningful objectives. The objectives will continue to the monitored throughout the lifetime of the plan and reported annually.

It is therefore expected that the learning acquired, will assist over time in rolling out a more effective `localised' approach to the equalities agenda.

Given the knowledge base we currently have, it is likely that some objectives will impact on more than one protected group, whilst others will be specific to a particular one. At the same time some protected groups will not be represented at all. In such cases, gathering robust and informative data will become an objective in its own right.



We acknowledge that in some cases there will be a deliberate effort to address issues which disproportionately affect one group. There will be instances where the lack of data in respect of particular protected groups will lead to a broader approach until such time as specific issues are identified through ongoing engagement and more robust data gathering.

The objectives have been developed following the engagement/consultation events that took place during the preparation of the following plans:

- Community Cohesion Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Community Safety Plan
- Community Plan
- Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy.

# 8. Gender Pay Objective

The Authority has now implemented a Job Evaluation/Equal pay scheme which has harmonised Terms and Conditions. An objective has been identified to address this issue and is included within the attached Equality Objectives.

The authority has compiled a Pay Strategy to address relevant issues. The strategy can be viewed upon request.

# 9. Publishing and Monitoring Results

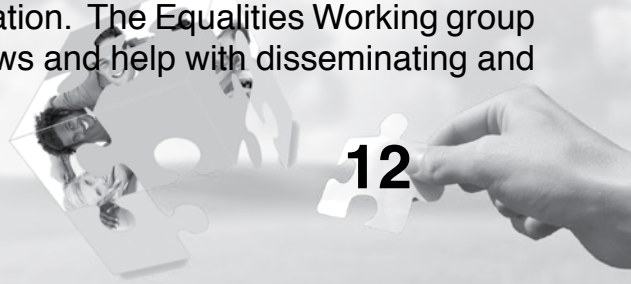
### 9.1 What we will do

The annual Equality Report will be published by 31st March, of each year. The report will include:

- the steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information
- how the information has been used to meet the general duty
- outline the effectiveness of the relevant information
- show progress of the objectives
- offer relevant employment information

The Local Government Wales measure 2010 places a duty on local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. The Measure notes seven areas under its definition of improvement and two of these are Service Availability and Fairness linking clearly to the Equalities agenda. The Council already plans and monitors Equalities work on a service area level using a dedicated section within current departmental Operational Plans.

All Equalities policies, annual reports and action plans are reported to the Council's Executive Board in the first instance at the beginning of any consultation. The Equalities Working group will then be included throughout the process for their views and help with disseminating and information sharing within their directorates.



## 10. Welsh Language

The Council's Welsh Language Scheme, is currently under review, in the meantime the existing scheme applies. An annual monitoring report will continue to be prepared and published.

The Council continues to work closely with partner organisations such as the Welsh Language Board, the WLGA (Welsh Local Government Association), Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful (the local language initiative), Coleg Gwent and the University of Glamorgan (local Welsh for Adult Centres), along with Grwp Deddf (a South East Wales regional officers network) to ensure that the targets in the Welsh Language Scheme and, more importantly, the needs of its Welsh speaking population, are met.

Welsh Medium Education falls within the remit of the Schools Department within the Community Services Directorate and a separate Welsh Language Education Scheme is published, outlining education developments and initiatives across the County Borough.

Any future Welsh Language development will be taken following receipt of guidance in relation to public bodies requirement to implement the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which was approved by the National Assembly for Wales in December 2010 and received Royal Assent in February 2011.

## 11. Contact Details

How to contact us

If you would like a copy of this plan in any other format or translated into another language, please contact:

Equalities Officer
Civic Centre, Castle Street,
Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
Tel: 01685 724673
Email: Equalities@merthyr.gov.uk
Council's website: www.merthyr.gov.uk



## Appendices

**Appendix 1**

# Information Gathered

### The changing population of Merthyr Tydfil – Key messages

The County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil extends 14 miles through the Taff Valley, taking in the Taff Bargoed Valley at Bedlinog, from the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north. The total area of the County Borough is 55 square miles which makes it the smallest Unitary Authority in Wales.

The main population base is in the centre of Merthyr Tydfil itself but the area also contains a number of villages, which lie on the outskirts of the Town Centre.
The County Borough's heritage and history are closely linked to the iron and mining industries. The built fabric of Merthyr Tydfil has been created over many years and past industrial activity has left the area with a rich heritage ranging from imposing bridges and viaducts to its characteristic workers cottages.

At the time of the 2001 Census the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil had a resident population of 55,981, who lived in 23,145 households. This figure represented a decline of around 4,000 on the population recorded ten years previous in the 1991 census. The decrease in the population of Merthyr Tydfil during the 20th Century is linked to economic decline in the area, with the closure of traditional industries. At the time of 2001 Census it was estimated that approximately 1% of the population of Merthyr Tydfil were non- white British.

Since the 2001 Census the decline of the population is estimated to have slowed. The area experienced slight population growth in the period 2006 and 2009, and this is likely to be linked to the arrival of new residents from other regions of the UK and from outside of the UK.

Merthyr Tydfil contains a large number of communities from the more traditional communities based on geography, (neighbourhoods, villages and estates) to a wide range of communities of interest (based for example on faith, age, disability, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual preference and gender identity). A complex network of community relationships has developed as a result.

In Merthyr Tydfil in 2008 a number of major employers in the area employed migrant workers:

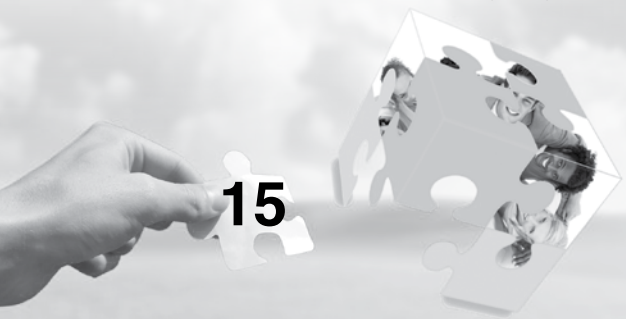
- approximately 60% of the workforce (total 1,000) at St. Merryn Foods were migrant workers, primarily from Poland and Portugal



- approximately 25% of the workforce (total 400) at OP Chocolates were migrants workers
- approximately one third of the workforce of Triumph Business Solutions were migrant workers
- a large number of medical staff at Prince Charles Hospital had moved to Merthyr Tydfil to work, including a substantial number of Filipino nurses. Merthyr Tydfil is a key town in the Heads of the Valleys area. This has led to businesses establishing themselves in the County Borough to meet the changing needs of local communities. For example:
- a number of shop owners who are Asian British of Indian origin have purchased retail premises in all parts of Merthyr Tydfil, running convenience stores which serve villages and neighbourhoods
- a number of Indian restaurants have opened in the larger population centres in the County Borough, staffed by people of Bangladeshi origin
- a substantial number of Chinese restaurants and takeaways have opened in many of the communities throughout the County Borough.
- a Tapas Bar has opened in Pontmorlais area of the Town Centre
- Polish grocery shops have opened in the Town Centre and in Dowlais

The diversity of the population of Merthyr Tydfil is not only reflected in the nationality or ethnic origin of people who live in the area, but also in relation to different communities of interest. For example:

- the population of Merthyr Tydfil is largely Christian, although there are a number of Muslims, Buddhists', Hindu's, Jews and Sikhs living in the area
- there is a small population of Gypsy Travellers living in Merthyr Tydfil, some living on the site in Glyn Mil and some living in permanent housing in the various locations throughout Merthyr Tydfil, there is also a sizeable concentration on the Galon Uchaf housing estate.
- 215 people in Merthyr Tydfil are registered as having a learning disability
- it is estimated that some 14% of the population are being treated for a mental health condition
- there is a growing population of older people aged over 85 years of age
- 13,690 people (24%) of the total population were under 18 years of age
- 300 people living in Merthyr Tydfil have some kind of visual impairment
- there are significant concentrations of poverty in Merthyr Tydfil and 23.2% of children attending schools in the area receive free school meals
- 220 people living in Merthyr Tydfil have some kind of hearing impairment ranging from people who are both deaf and blind, those who are deaf without speech through to those who have a hearing impairment
- an estimated 8,600 people have some kind of physical disability
- it is known that Merthyr Tydfil has a substantial number of people with substance misuse



problems, in particular alcohol misuse.

- statistically it is likely that 820 people in Merthyr Tydfil will be either gay or lesbian or bisexual
- there is likely to be a small number of people who are transgender living in Merthyr Tydfil, although there are no reliable figures on this
- 4.5% of pupils in schools in Merthyr Tydfil speak English as an additional language

Each individual resident of Merthyr Tydfil, of whatever nationality, ethnic origin or community of interest, has the right to receive good quality services from all organisations in the area, the right to be treated fairly and with respect, and the right to have their voice heard in the debate about which services are delivered in the future and how they are delivered.

***Source - 'I AM Merthyr' - Community Cohesion Strategy 2011.***



**Appendix 2**

Merthyr Tydfil
County Borough Council

# Strategic Equality Objectives

## 2012 – 2016



# EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1

## Employment

| | |
|---|---|
| Objective | Improve employment and training opportunities for young people and other under represented groups |
| Outcome | A prosperous, cultural and diverse Merthyr Tydfil |
| Protected Characteristics / Other Equalities Issues covered | Our current focus is on young people and gypsy travelers but we will also be investigating if any other protected characteristic is particularly affected by a lack of training or job opportunities |
| Links to other Strategies and Plans | Community Plan. Service Strategic Plan. Operational Plan. Corporate Priorities. |
| Links to MTBC Service Areas | Community Services Directorate |
| Evidence Base | The number of school leaver at Year 11 known to be NEETS (not in education, employment or training is rising and is higher than the Wales level. The percentage young people in employment is lower than the percentage in the general working age population |
| Information from Engagement | Young people told us that there was a lack of employment opportunities in the area.<br>*Source – Community Conversation* |
| Success Measure / Performance Indicators | • The percentage of young people 18 - 24 years old in emplomen t.<br>• Number of NEET's within the County Borough. |
| Timeline | Annual report will record comparison of figures from baseline 2011 - 2012 data, in order to gauge changes or improvement in the Performance Indicator results over the four years of implementation. |
| Stakeholders | The public, MTBC elected members and staff members, CYP Partnership, Merthyr Youth Forum, Merthyr Tydfil county borough schools and governing bodies. Education providers. Job Centre Plus. |



| ACTION | TIMETABLE | PROGRESS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1<br>Providing a greater focus on skills for jobs. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.2<br>Further decreasing the NEETs amongst young people by supporting them into sustainable employment. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.3<br>Encourage and improve education and skills training for work within the area. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.4<br>Targeting youth support services to improve the employability of young people. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.5<br>Increase participation and staying-on rates in post-16 education and training. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.6<br>Narrow inequalities in achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged areas, groups and individuals | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |



# EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2

## Access

| | |
|---|---|
| Objective | Better access to quality services and facilities. |
| Outcome | A Healthy and Fair Society |
| Protected Characteristics / Other Equalities Issues covered | Our current focus is on both older people and disabled people but we will also be investigating if any other protected characteristic is particularly affected by a lack of access to services |
| Links to other Strategies and Plans | Community Plan. Service Strategic Plan. Operational Plan. Corporate Priorities. Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Links to MTCBC Service Areas | Customer Services Directorate |
| Community Services Directorate | The number of school leaver at Year 11 known to be NEETS (not in education, employment or training is rising and is higher than the Wales level. The percentage young people in employment is lower than the percentage in the general working age population |
| Evidence Base | An opinion poll commissioned by Disability Rights Commission found that 76% of disabled people in Wales reported difficulty in accessing goods and services.<br>*Source : Victoria Winkler (editor) Equalities Issues in Wales: a research review. EHRC 11 (2009* |
| Information from Engagement | **People with Physical Disabilities** – They told us that many buildings in Merthyr Tydfil were not accessible and at times they were not consulted about the design of new facilities. Where there was specialist equipment to make their facilities more accessible, we were told staff were often not aware of how to use the equipment and the equipment was not serviced and in working order.<br><br>**Older People** – Older people also told us that the biggest problem that they experienced was the lack of public transport in the evenings and how this prevented them from participating in a range of activities.<br><br>**People who have a Learning Disability** - They also told us about the lack of flexibility in relation to the delivery of support services and the difficulties they experience in influencing the delivery of services. |



| | |
|---|---|
| Success Measure / Performance Indicators | • Results of customer satisfaction surveys undertaken and the results of inspection/regulator assessments.<br>• Percentage of services judged to be accessible by customers or by regulators/inspectors.<br>• Percentage of public facilities which are compliant with statutory regulations. |
| Timeline | Annual report will record comparison of figures from baseline 2011 - 2012 data, in order to gauge changes or improvement in the Performance Indicator results over the four years of implementation. |
| Stakeholders | The public, MTBC elected members and staff members. |

| ACTION | TIMETABLE | PROGRESS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1<br>Reconfigure services to meet the continuing demand for services as the older population increases | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.2<br>Moving away from traditional social care services such as day centres to more community based options. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.3<br>Working together to improve access to health and social care facilities in the Borough.<br>Opportunities are now being sought to provide more reliable, efficient and accessible public service transport to local health and social care facilities. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.4<br>Delivery of the “Tell Us Once” (TUO) programme which allows citizens to inform central and local government just once of changes in their circumstances, saving the time and expense of contacting a number of organisations. | March 2013<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.5<br>Deliver the Council Customer First and citizen engagement programme to seek users’ views on services, involving then in the design of new services and in the review of existing services. | March 2013<br>Subject to annual review and external funding. | |

# EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 3

**Engagement**

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|---|---|
| Objective | Improve community cohesion for all members of society by fostering good relations between protected groups |
| Outcome | A Healthy, Safe and Fair Society |
| Protected Characteristics / Other Equalities Issues covered | This is a broad piece of work which includes all protected groups. |
| Links to other Strategies and Plans | Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Links to MTCBC Service Areas | Customer Community Directorate<br>Community Services Directorate |
| Evidence Base | The number of school leaver at Year 11 known to be NEETS (not in education, employment or training is rising and is higher than the Wales level. The percentage young people in employment is lower than the percentage in the general working age population |
| Evidence Base | The evidence base can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy. |
| Information from Engagement | The evidence base can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Success Measure / Performance Indicators | All measures and targets can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Timeline | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Stakeholders | MADF, Migrant Workers Forum, The public, MTBC elected members and staff members. |

| ACTION | TIMETABLE | PROGRESS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1<br>Improving Community Cohesion at a local level | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy | |
| 1.2<br>Fostering integration | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy | |
| 1.3<br>Change the public perception of Merthyr Tydfil | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy | |
| **Footnote**<br>Further information can be found within the Community Cohesion Strategy. | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy | |



# EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 4

## Hate Crime

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|---|---|
| Objective | Improve reporting of hate crime and domestic violence and satisfaction with how it is handled |
| Outcome | A Healthy, Safe and Fair Society |
| Protected Characteristics / Other Equalities Issues covered | This is a broad piece of work which includes all protected groups. |
| Links to other Strategies and Plans | Community Cohesion Strategy<br>Community Plan |
| Links to MTCBC Service Areas | Customer Community Directorate<br>Community Services Directorate |
| Evidence Base | Hidden in plain sight Report (EHRC 2011)<br>How Fair is Wales Report (EHRC 2010)<br>Community Cohesion Strategy<br>Domestic Violence Action Plan |
| Information from Engagement | All information from engagement can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Success Measure / Performance Indicators | All measures and targets can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Timeline | All timelines can be found in the Community Cohesion Strategy |
| Stakeholders | MADF, Migrant Workers Forum, The public, MTBC elected members and staff members. |



| ACTION | TIMETABLE | PROGRESS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1<br>Further joint working with Rhondda Cynon Taf on a perpetrator research project on the issues that affect perpetrators of domestic abuse to see if better intervention can reduce or stop the abuse. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.2<br>The delivery of integrated domestic abuse services to all victims and children within Merthyr Tydfil.<br><br>Acheivement through the support of Teulu partnership as a single referral pathway | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.3<br>Identify and establish third party hate crime reporting centres in key agencies in Merthyr Tydfil | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.4<br>Work in partnership to develop a hate crime prevention toolkit, which includes focused awareness raising activities for use in communities where hate crime appears to be more prevalent. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.5<br>Develop a protocol for key agencies to follow to support victims of hate crime. | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.6<br>Disseminate the protocol and guidance amongst agencies | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1.7<br>Develop a hate crime reporting leaflet for members of the public and disseminate via key agencies and the Community Cohesion website | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.8<br>Complete a review of investigative processes to ensure that adequate resources are deployed to enable the identification of perpetrators of hate crime (e.g. the use of CCTV). | March 2014<br>Subject to annual review | |
| 1.9<br>Develop a staff Domestic Violence policy | March 2013 | |
| 1.10<br>Ensure adoption of Domestic Abuse Equality Bill | March 2014 | |



# EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 5

## Gender/Equal Pay Objective

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|---|---|
| Objective | Ensure Equity of pay across Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council |
| Outcome | Equity of Pay |
| Protected Characteristics / Other Equalities Issues covered | All protected groups |
| Links to other Strategies and Plans | Pay Strategy 2012<br>Corporate Priorities |
| Links to MTCBC Service Areas | All Directorates |
| Evidence Base | Assessment of Impact of Pay scales shows the need for removal of increment points within grades 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7 |
| Information from Engagement | No engagement has taken place |
| Success Measure / Performance Indicators | Future annual assessment of impact |
| Timeline | Annual report will record comparison of figures from baseline 2011 - 2012 data, in order to gauge changes or improvement in the Performance Indicator results over the four years of implementation. |
| Stakeholders | MTCBC staff<br>Elected members<br>Unions |

| ACTION | TIMETABLE | PROGRESS |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1<br>Implement the removal of incremental points in Grades 2, 3, 4, 5, & 7 in conjunction with modifications already planned | April 2014 | |
| 1.2<br>Improve data collection process to allow more sophisticated analysis | April 2013 | |
| 1.3<br>Deliver pay strategy | April 2014 | |

