

### Our five Equality Objectives for 2022-2024 are to:

1. Engage with our citizens to participate and have their voices heard to understand and respond to the needs of our communities.
2. Promote and facilitate inclusive, safe and cohesive communities.
3. Create an inclusive and diverse workforce, which reflects the communities in Merthyr Tydfil.
4. Ensure equity of pay across Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.
5. Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing our services.

### Our Equalities Vision for Merthyr Tydfil is:

*"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."*

### What we did - the highlights

Supported the newly formed Merthyr Malayali Cultural Association (MMCA) and their inauguration ceremony took place on Sunday 20th March, where the group had foods from their culture to sample.

Promoted International Women's Day and organised a Self-defence event delivered by South Wales Police for students in Merthyr Tydfil College.

Held a small event in the red house for LGBT+ History Month which runs throughout February. Two guest speakers spoke at the event, one spoke on the issue of homophobia, the other on transphobia and both about the importance of nurturing a tolerant and accepting society. The Red House building was also lit up in the colours of the Progress Flag, and the Progress flag was flown outside the Civic Centre to mark the month.

Proud Councils held a competition for young people aged 11-18 living in Wales, encouraging them to create a piece of art to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community. The themes were 'becoming me' or 'how adults can be an ally of young LGBTQ+ people'.

Continued to support young people aged 11-25 within the County Borough, within settings including schools/education provisions, youth centres and through outreach work.

Produced and distributed the 'The Young People's Support Guide' which included topics centred on issues that pupils felt were exacerbated during periods of lockdown and school closures due to COVID-19.

Supported adults in the community to attend and complete a wide range of courses and qualifications designed to promote personal development and progression within or into employment.

Established an Accessibility Working Group, actions from the group include; creating a signposting page staff on the intranet which provides staff with information, links to training and 'how to' guides to make documents accessible in one easy to access location. Increasing our accessibility score from 40 (not satisfactory) to 96 which indicates a very good accessibility score for positive overall user experience. The group also attending 'Making Information Easy to Read and Understand' training.

We continue to support the local Armed Forces community. An area of this commitment is the work undertaken by the Regional School Liaison Officer (RSLO) for service children such as the Supporting Service Children in Education Wales (SSCE). Including promoting a free Summer Residential for Service children whom attend a school within the County Borough.

We also supported Armed Forces 'Month of the Military Child' by hosting Armed Forces Family Fun Fitness Sessions at Cyfarthfa Park Merthyr. We approved the Reserve Forces Mobilisation policy on 2 March 2022 which intends to define our obligations towards all employees who are members of the Reserve Forces.

On Monday 21 June 2021, we raised the Armed Forces flag to commemorate Armed Forces Day.

Welsh Language was highlighted via an online 'Eisteddfod T' event, whilst the 'Being Bilingual' Booklet was turned into an animation. The SHWMAERONMENT social media page was launched and we continue to work in partnership with Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg (Learn Welsh Glamorgan) to provide workplace training opportunities for staff and Councillors.

Continued to support people with housing needs such as homelessness & rough sleeping.

On 30 September Umbrella Cymru provided a Gender and Sexual Diversity training course that was accessible for all MTCBC staff virtually.

A new community track was opened in the summer of 2021 following a successful funding application by Active Merthyr. The John Sellwood Community Track is open to the public every weekend and every evening. Users include local groups such as Active Wheels inclusive social club, walk to run groups and sports clubs such as Merthyr Triathlon club.

Work has also taken place to revamp our Corporate Induction for new staff, which now has a greater focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the Council's Vision/Values. It will link to our zero tolerance for Bullying and Harassment, and our Dignity and Respect at Work Policy.

We implemented 2 new E-learning platforms, one for staff called Skills Hub and one for Managers called Kallidus. Skills Hub offers opportunity for staff to access a library of over 650 online courses to help improve and develop skills whilst increasing knowledge of areas of interest. This includes modules and elements focused on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, British Values and Personal Development. Kallidus focuses on modules to support and inform MTCBC managers in areas such as unconscious bias, emotional intelligence, managing conflict, leadership styles and equalities.

As at March 2022, the median gender pay gap is 0%, so men at MTCBC are paid 0% more than women, which means for every £1 a man earns, a woman earns £1. However, on average men at MTCBC are paid 2.34% more than women, which means for every £1 a man earns, a woman will earn 98p.

We continued to raise awareness, whilst ensuring we strive to meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality duty.

You can read the full Annual Equality Report 2021-2022, on the Council's website: [www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk)

