Equality & Diversity Policy

Penpych Community Primary School
Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol

Policy Leader	**: Mr T Lewis**
Head teacher	**: Mr T Lewis**
Chair of Governors	**: Mr M Cude**

Policy applies to Academic Year 2026 -27

Signed HT: **Date: September 2026**

Signed CoG: **Date: September 2026**

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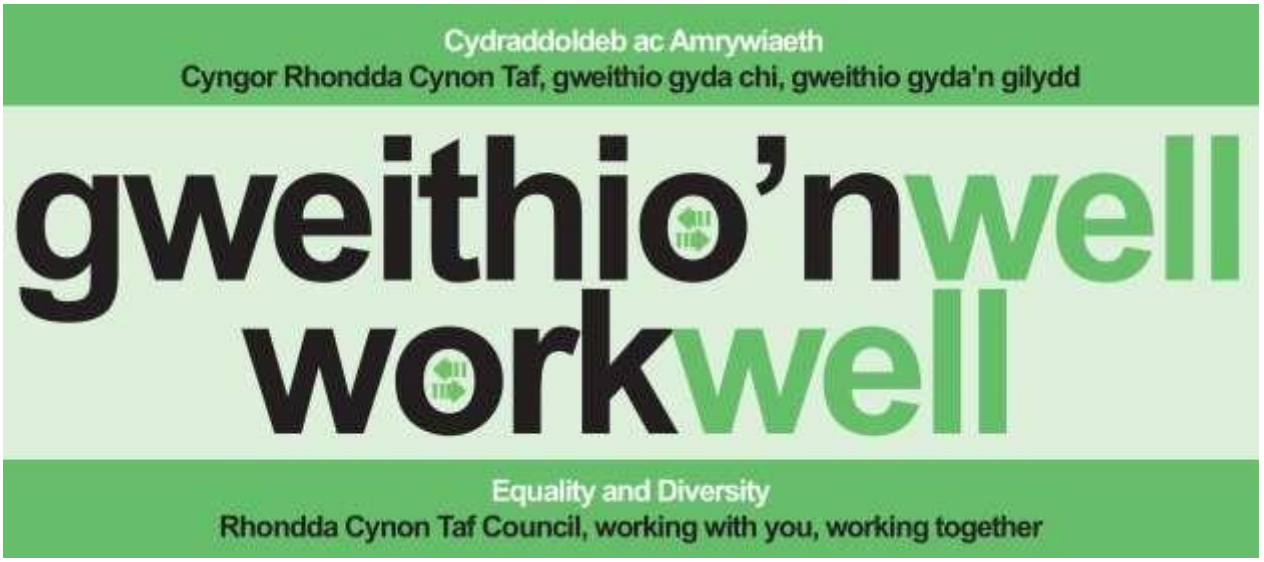

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Equality and Diversity Policy

This document is available in Welsh please see Polisi Cydraddoldeb ac Amrywioldeb

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the Council's approach to equal opportunities. Its purpose is to make all employees, and the community as a whole, aware of the Council's commitment to equality and diversity.

The Council considers equality of opportunity to be of mainstream importance, taking its place equally within all corporate strategies, ideologies and principles.

The Council wishes to promote equality of opportunity within the Council for all existing and potential employees and for all those in our communities, regardless of gender, gender identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or age.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity in employment and in service delivery.

We aim to be a Council that values and respects all employees, job applicants, customers, residents living in our area and visitors coming to the area. We believe that everyone living in and working in Rhondda Cynon Taf has the right to be treated fairly and to live free from discrimination.

We will work to ensure that everyone in our communities is able to access our services and information. We will consider people's different needs as we develop our services and practices and aim to ensure that our approach is inclusive of everyone.

As employers we will work to promote a positive working life for all employees. We aim to create a workplace culture that is free from harassment and discrimination whereby people's differences are respected and valued, rather than just tolerated.

We aim to promote an environment in Rhondda Cynon Taf whereby we challenge prejudices, stereotypes and negative assumptions about people and groups of people.

We recognise that we are better able to serve our communities if the diversity in our communities is reflected among our employees. We believe that our Council is enriched by people's differences and we will work to ensure that this message is communicated throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3. POLICY AIMS

To achieve the aims of this policy we will promote equality of opportunity in employment and in service delivery. The policy is set out to show how we will promote equality in each of these areas. Our overall aim is to ensure that people within Rhondda Cynon Taf are treated fairly and with respect, that individual needs are recognised, and that we work to enable everyone to live without discrimination, harassment or prejudice.

4. EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

The Council is committed to introducing wide-ranging policies and procedures to provide equality of opportunity for all existing and prospective employees.

The Council operates a flexible working scheme to all posts where this is practicable and also operates a job share scheme. These schemes ensure that all employees with family or caring responsibilities are able to arrange their working hours to suit their needs.

Employees involved in delivering services will receive information or training on equality and diversity so that they understand they must not discriminate against any other person or group of people. Employees are also encouraged to take up equality courses available to them through the Council. Cabinet and elected members will receive training so that they are aware of the standards expected of them in terms of equality and diversity.

The Council is committed to ensuring fairness in its recruitment and selection procedures and ensures that all appointments are based on merit only. We work to ensure that minority groups are encouraged to apply for our vacancies so that as far as possible, the diversity in our communities is reflected in our workforce.

The Council will promote equality of opportunity in employment by making sure all employees involved in recruitment are aware that:

- ☐ No internal or external job applicant can receive less favourable treatment than another because of gender, gender identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and during maternity leave.
- ☐ They should not impose any conditions or requirements that unfairly affect applicants from one group more than applicants from another group.
- ☐ Any qualifications, conditions or requirements applied to a job must be relevant and justifiable for the post.
- ☐ Each individual is judged and assessed according to his or her capability of carrying out a given task.

- An interview must be offered to all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a post and reasonable adjustments must be made for disabled job applicants who require these for interview.

5. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Examples of the practices and procedures the Council proposes to implement to make sure it operates a fair employment policy are listed in this section.

(a) Job Descriptions

These are examined before recruitment to any post to minimise any possibility of direct or indirect discrimination. They are written clearly and concisely to make sure they do not directly or indirectly discriminate.

The language on each job description is checked to ensure it is gender neutral and non discriminatory.

(b) Person Specifications

These are prepared for all posts before the post can be advertised. Their aim is to identify the knowledge, experience, and competencies required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post. Officers of the Council are expected to scrutinise them to make sure that the criteria being used are strictly essential and relevant to the post.

The person specification should not include any requirements that could be considered to be discriminatory. Any specification that could potentially be more difficult to fulfil for people belonging to one group as opposed to people belonging to another group, would be considered to be discriminatory.

Person specifications are updated each time a post becomes vacant to make sure that they continue to reflect the needs of the job..

The language on each job specification is checked to ensure it is gender neutral and non discriminatory.

All person specifications will also include reference to Welsh Language skills requirements.

(c) Advertising Vacancies

The Council recognises a need for the principle of wide advertising to make sure it obtains as many applications as possible especially from disadvantaged or minority groups. Restricted advertising is only allowed to avoid redundancy, to help deployment or because of divisional restructuring.
The Council regularly liases with local Job Centres to ensure that disabled people are encouraged to apply for its vacancies. Our vacancies are advertised through our e recruitment system to encourage applications from a

wide field.

Our job advertisements display the Positive about Disabled People '2 ticks' symbol to encourage disabled people to apply to us for vacancies.

(d) Application Forms

The Council's job application forms are designed to make sure that no information is collected which is not essential to the job in question.

All applicants are asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the recruitment process so that we can check that we are encouraging applications from all sectors of the community. Human Resources staff will monitor the progress of randomly selected posts. The Council recognises the difficulties which minority groups face when competing for positions and is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants.

(e) Short-listing

The Council has identified the procedure for short listing in the Recruitment and Selection policy. This will be adhered to at all times. The short list should be based on the information contained in the application form related to the job description and the person specification. The same criteria should be consistently applied to all candidates.

Personal details, including name, age, gender etc. are detached form all application forms prior to being given to short-listing officers. Therefore, personal details are not used in the short-listing process. This ensures that only essential information is used for short listing, reducing the risk of discrimination occurring.

In line with the Council's commitments under the '2 tick symbol', disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a post will be guaranteed an interview.

(f) Selection Tests

Selection tests will only be carried out by persons qualified and competent to do so.

As selection tests may be biased culturally or in some other way, they must be chosen carefully. The Council will only use tests that relate to job requirements and measure an individual's actual or potential ability to perform or to train for a particular job or career. The Equality & Diversity Team should be contacted to check new selection tests to make sure they are not biased or potentially discriminatory.

(g) Selection Criteria

Research has proved that people can suffer disadvantage and discrimination in an interview when unrelated and irrelevant questions are

asked. To make sure there is no discrimination, the Council expects all Council representatives to observe the following selection practices:

- Not to ask questions at interview about a candidate's personal life including for example marital status, children, family arrangements, religion or belief, gender identity or sexual orientation. Interview questions must only be related to ability to carry out the duties of the post. Residential status will not be queried at interview but any appointee will be expected to provide proof of the right to work in this country in accordance with current legislation.

- Language preference can only be used as a selection criteria if there is a legitimate and justifiable job requirement or it is essential for job entry training, this can include Welsh under the duties placed on us by the current Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations.

- To make selection decisions only on the basis of the requirements of the job set out in the job description and the person specification.

- Not to ask candidates irrelevant questions which could be seen as directly or indirectly discriminatory, such as asking someone form a minority ethnic background questions to test their understanding of the customs of the United Kingdom.

(h) Interviewing

Interviews will be conducted by persons identified within the Council's policy document on recruitment and selection of staff. The Council will seek to provide a comprehensive interviewing skills course for potential interviewers. It is our objective to make sure only trained interviewers take part in the selection process.

When needed, reasonable adjustments will be made to help disabled people to participate fully in interviews. This could involve providing facilities to meet their needs or providing a full refund of expenses, including transport costs for accessible transport.

(i) Welsh Language

Employee's and perspective employee's language choice (Welsh or English) will be respected during each stage of the recruitment process. This will include the opportunity to complete an application form, receive correspondence and attend an interview conducted in, Welsh or English.

(j) Promotion

Any post which, on becoming vacant, represents a promotion opportunity for existing staff, will be filled only after the post has been advertised in accordance with paragraph (c).

(k) Monitoring

The Council has introduced a system of regular employment monitoring covering existing employees and job applicants. Both internal and external applicants are requested to provide information on their ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and age in order that we can monitor the effectiveness of the Equality & Diversity Policy.

We believe monitoring is essential so that we can:

- ☐ Assess progress towards equality of opportunity, identify areas of concern and develop programmes of action where needed.

- ☐ Check the extent to which progress has been made in achieving equality targets and National Performance indicators.

(l) Job Sharing

The Council has a comprehensive job sharing policy and encourages managers to consider the suitability of posts for job sharing when they become vacant. This can be of particular benefit to people with childcare and other caring responsibilities and to disabled people. All vacancies are considered eligible for job share unless a Chief Officer can show that this would not be justified for a specific post.

(m) Technical Equipment and Adaptations

The Council will make reasonable adjustments to enable a successful disabled job applicant to carry out fully the duties of the post. This can include providing appropriate technical equipment and adaptations. Financial assistance towards the cost of technical equipment and adaptations is available from Jobcentre plus' Access to Work scheme.

6. EQUALITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

The Council will promote equality of opportunity in service delivery to ensure that everyone living in the area is able to access our services and understand that the Council will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in our communities.

We will review our services regularly to make sure that they meet the needs of all members of the community.

A range of equality initiatives in service delivery will continue to be implemented as part of this policy. The initiatives include the following:

a) Dealing with Hate Crime

The Council will not tolerate harassment of its employees or service users whilst accessing our services. Some harassment may constitute hate crime if it is on

the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability. An extensive programme of Hate Crime Awareness training has been undertaken with a large number of staff and managers so employees are aware of the steps they need to take if they have experienced or witnessed hate crime.

The Council continue to help facilitate the Cwm Taf Community Cohesion Group that works with external agencies and local people to promote equality and community cohesion in the area.

b) Consultation with the Community

The Council seeks to ensure that the views of minority groups are sought when developing Council strategies, policies and procedures.

The Council accepts that people in minority groups are, and always have been, under-represented in decision making processes and acknowledges that the best way of providing services which reflect the needs of a minority group is to consult with members of the group directly. All divisions will be encouraged to seek the views of people from minority groups when setting up consultative mechanisms.

Where equality impact assessments are carried out during major policy development, appropriate community groups will be contacted and local people from minority backgrounds will be given the opportunity to express their views.

c) Accessibility

The Council has made improvements to the majority of council owned and operated buildings to ensure that they are accessible to disabled people. Work will continue in this area.

The Council will ensure that as far as possible, only accessible buildings are used for external meetings and events and that access requirements for such meetings and events are always given consideration. For example, facilities such as induction loops will be made available when required.

The Council recognises and supports the social model of disability. As a result, the Council is committed to removing the barriers that disabled people face in society, including those that prevent people from accessing our services or working within the authority. To work towards this aim, the Council will continue to facilitate its Disability Forum, consisting of disabled people, their families and representatives living within Rhondda Cynon Taf. The forum works with the Council to promote disability equality in the area.

d) Language and translation

Information is provided in accessible formats where this is required, so that all needs are recognised e.g. the needs of visually impaired people, hearing impaired people, people with learning difficulties and people whose first language is not English.

Where practicable the Council will provide interpreters for customers who use languages other than English - including Welsh, British Sign Language and minority languages.

When necessary we will translate documents into languages other than Welsh or English and will produce documents in accessible formats such as large print, Braille or audiotape for blind and visually impaired people.

e) Complaints Procedures

Any customer or service user who feels they have been treated unfairly by a Council employee because of their gender, gender identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or age can make an official complaint. Their complaint will be thoroughly investigated as set down in the Council's complaints procedure. A person's language choice will be respected during this process. Persons are free to make representations/respond in Welsh if they wish to do so.

7. RESPONSIBILITY AS AN EMPLOYER - GENERAL APPROACH

To make sure we are able to fulfil the aims of this policy, the Council has made the following commitments:

- ☐ To provide the necessary resources, wherever practicable, to plan, implement and monitor equality policies and strategies.
- ☐ To promote equality of opportunity for all people.
- ☐ To consult regularly with trades unions on the content and implementation of the policy.
- ☐ To make sure that the policy is known to all employees.
- ☐ To provide suitable training and guidance to elected members and staff (especially senior management), to make sure they understand their duties under the law and under the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- ☐ To regularly review existing policies and procedures and to change them where they are found to be actually or potentially discriminatory. The Council will carry out equality impact assessments as new policies and procedures are developed, where this is identified as being appropriate.
- ☐ To monitor the existing workforce and job applicants by ethnic origin, gender, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation and religion to evaluate the progress of the policy.
- ☐ To ensure that all information relevant to the policy is open for public scrutiny.
- ☐ To take disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's procedures against any employee who is found to have breached

the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy or any future Codes of

Practice that will be implemented.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

The Council as an employer accepts that it has a major responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity. At the same time it expects its employees to also recognise their responsibilities.

The Council places the following responsibilities on individual employees:

- To not unlawfully discriminate, or induce or attempt to induce others to unlawfully discriminate
- To adhere to the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy and refrain from using discriminatory language or displaying discriminatory behaviour at work.
- To report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices to an appropriate senior officer within the Council.
- To refrain from harassing, abusing or intimidating colleagues on the grounds of gender, gender identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or age.
  Where this is found to occur, employees may be liable to disciplinary action.
- To work with the Council in promoting equality of opportunity at work.
- To not victimise individuals because they have made complaints or provided information on harassment or discrimination on the grounds of gender, gender identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or age.
- To seek guidance from senior managers or the Equality & Diversity Team where they are in any doubt as to the legality of procedures or actions. The need to seek guidance also applies where an employee is instructed by an immediate supervisor to take action, which the employee believes, may be discriminatory.

9. CONCLUSION

This policy will be overseen by the Chief Executive and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

If you need to discuss any problem arising from alleged or suspected harassment or discrimination, or wish for more detailed information about equality and diversity or how the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy should be implemented, please contact the Equality & Diversity Team, Human Resources, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, CF40 2XX, Tel: (01443) 424075.