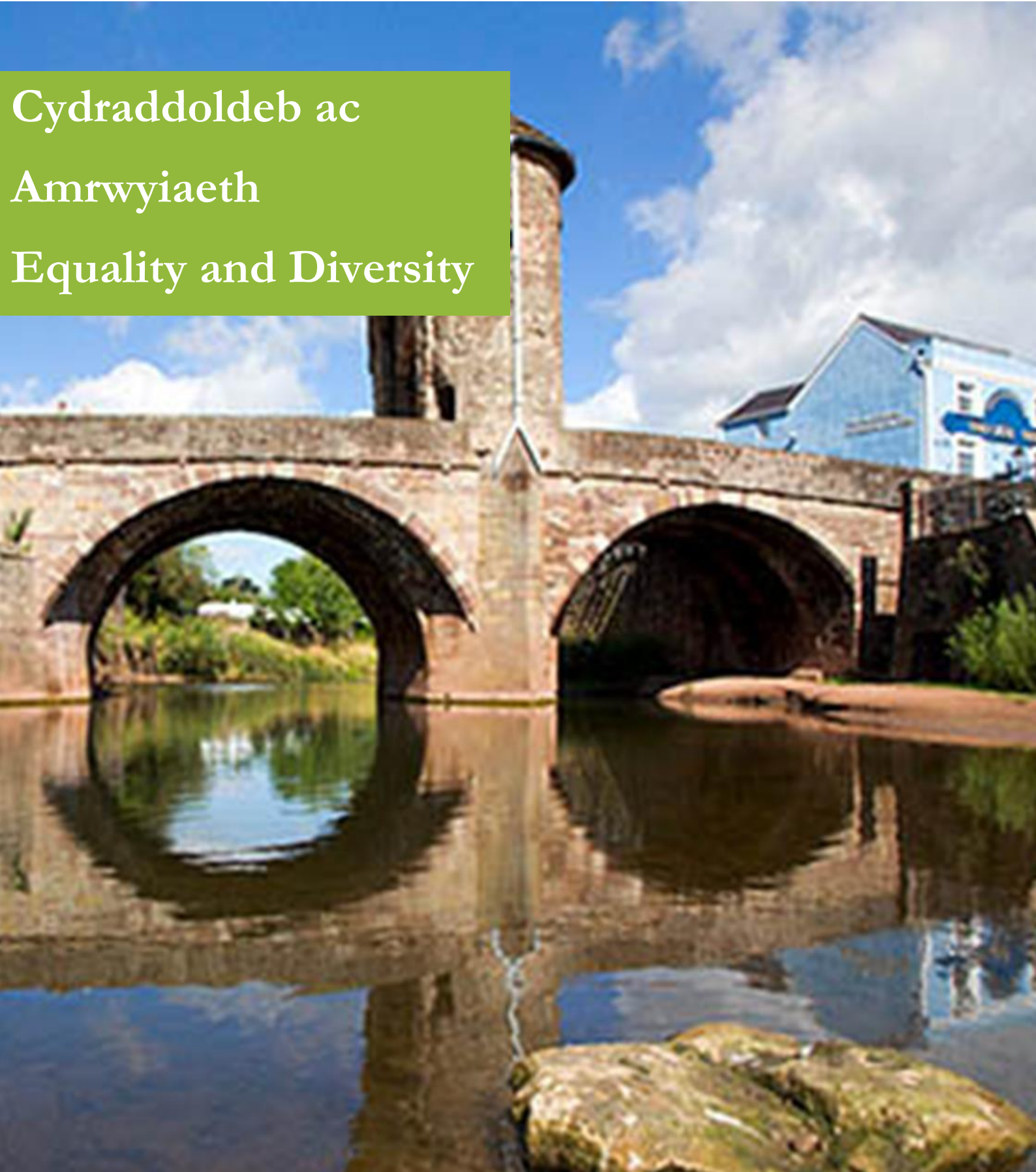


Cydraddoldeb ac
Amrwyiaeth
Equality and Diversity



Strategic Equality Plan
Annual Report
2019 – 2020



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

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Version Control

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Alternative Formats

This document is available on the Council's website at

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity>

If you require a hard copy of this document or a copy in a different format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio version, word format for screen readers etc. please contact:

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Foreword

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to building sustainable and resilient communities. The actions we take as a council help shape the place where we live and work. Monmouthshire is often perceived to be affluent but that often masks significant variations in peoples experiences. We believe in social justice and are committed to a fair and equal society. Our Strategic Equality Plan describes the activities we will deliver to make this a reality. This progress report covers the objectives within the plan approved by Council back in 2016. Its publication is a legal requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty but more importantly, we do this because we are committed to being accountable for our actions.

Public services are facing challenging times, we can only help people and communities achieve their potential if we work with everyone, drawing on the diversity of expertise, experience and energy that Monmouthshire is blessed with. It is vital that we ensure our policy decisions, service provision and behaviours fully take into account the impact they make on people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

I hope you can see from our examples of good practice in this report that the council continues to work exceptionally hard to deliver for its citizens who come under the umbrella of the protected characteristics. Alongside this we have begun to model the potential cumulative impacts of changes on groups and have enhanced our integrated impact assessment tool to take account of the new socio-economic duty.

I encourage you to take a look at this plan and see for yourself some of the things we have been doing.



Councillor Sara Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Justice and Community Development

Introduction

This annual monitoring report covers progress during the year ending March 2020. The objectives which it covers have since been superceeded by our third strategic equality plan but it remains important that we report back on progress made so that we can be held accountable for delivering our aims and to use the evaluation to help us target future improvements.

You can access the latest Strategic Equality Plan at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Links to strategies

The Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020 was approved by Council on the 3rd March 2016. It is important to note that it is not a standalone plan and has close links to a number of other key council, partnership and national strategies, plans and policies. Some of these are specifically focussed on equality and others have included equality as one of the key themes. Examples being:

- Social Justice Strategy 2017 - 2022
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- “Strategaeth Mwy na geiriau”/”More than words strategy” 2011 and 2016
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011-21
- Strategy for Older People Wales Phase 3
- Monmouthshire County Council Well-being Plan 2018
- Well Being of Future Generations Act 1st April 2016
- Social Care and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Equality Act 2010 not only requires the Council to comply with its general and specific duties highlighted below, but also provides an opportunity for it to demonstrate its commitment to the principles of equality which have been a feature of its functions prior to the implementation of the Act.

Our Social Justice Strategy

The Council's Social Justice Strategy demonstrates our commitment to address inequalities and improve outcomes for the county's people and communities. It has been driven by the council's desire to tackle the inequality highlighted in the well-being and population needs assessments carried out by local authorities and health boards following the passing of The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The strategy has three objectives:

- Give Children the Best Start In Life, Overcoming Barriers To Attainment and Opportunity.
- Overcome Inequalities in Access to Economic Prosperity
- Tackle The Scourge of Loneliness and Isolation

The strategic equality plan dovetails with this strategy, providing greater detail on some of the activities we will deliver to address inequality in the county

The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010

In exercising its functions the Council must have due regard 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;

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

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Specific Duties in Wales

The broad purpose of the specific duties is to help public bodies, such as this Council, in their performance of the general duty, and to aid transparency. In Wales the specific duties are set by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

The following are the specific duties:

- Setting equality objectives and publishing strategic equality plans
- Engagement
- Assessment of impact
- Equality information
- Employment information, pay differences and staff training
- Procurement
- Reporting and publishing

Monmouthshire's strategic equality objectives 2016-20

The objectives that were in place during the period to 2016 to 2020 were:

1. **Making a difference** – Working in partnership on projects that have a positive impact on people or groups of people with protected characteristics.
2. **Keeping our focus** – Despite challenging times we have to keep our focus on the more vulnerable people we provide services to.
3. **Celebrating and Commemorating**– it is important that we celebrate/recognise key equality events/campaigns that raise public awareness and show our respect as an organisation.
4. **Educating and guiding** – working closely with both staff and Elected Members offering training, advice and guidance to enable them to make informed decisions.
5. **Doing the basics** – we must do what were are required to do under the Equality Act 2010

Strategic Equality Objectives: Progress 2019-20

This section describes some of the specific things we have done which are aligned with the objectives set in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20. This was the final year of the plan and many of these actions were introduced following the publication of the original document. The annual monitoring reports for previous years can be accessed on the council's website for an overview of activity in previous years.

Making a difference

Working in partnership on projects that have a positive impact on people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

A Post Office was opened in the Usk Hub in May 2019. This is the first time ever that a post office has been operated by a local authority with the aim of retaining a key service. Post Offices have a high user base amongst older people while retention of local services is also very important for those with a disability.

MonLife, the Council's leisure service, was awarded the Disability Sport Wales insport Development Silver Accreditation by an independent panel. The insport Development programme aims to support and deliver inclusivity for disabled people through a toolkit developed by Disability Sport Wales. It supports the inclusive thinking, planning, development and delivery of a range of services. MonLife Active staff can now deliver across the spectrum to disabled and non-disabled people at whatever level they wish to participate or compete.

By achieving this standard, opportunities are widened, participation will increase, disabled people become more active and engaged and we have a nation who are hooked on sport for life. This will deliver a cultural change in attitude, approach and provision of physical activity and wider opportunities for disabled people.

The Council were accepted for the Disability Confident Committed pledge in 2019. This is a commitment made by the Council to promote opportunities for people with disabilities to apply for roles within the Council and to actively support existing staff who are disabled or have acquired a disability.

A guaranteed interview scheme for Armed Service Leavers, spouses, and reservists was introduced in 2019. This was to ensure that those disadvantaged by their time in service, or due to mobility issues are not disadvantaged when seeking meaningful employment. Policies and the ability to capture relevant data are currently being developed internally and monitoring will take place annually in order to ensure the scheme fulfils its purpose and is working effectively.

Monmouthshire Museums organised intergenerational memory cafes

A Menopause Café was organised in June 2019 at Usk Community Hall and the council signed up to the Menopause Café <https://www.menopausecafe.net/>

The Council reaffirmed its commitment to working with its armed forces community with a Covenant re-signing ceremony, together with our five Town Councils (Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow) who signed the Covenant for the first time. We believe this makes Monmouthshire the only local authority in the UK to have the principal authority and all town councils signing the covenant in unison.

The Reading Well for Mental Health scheme was launched in Wales in June 2019 (to join Reading Well for Dementia which started the year before). The books are available from all of our Community Hubs.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	
Race			

Keeping our Focus

Despite challenging times we have to keep our focus on the more vulnerable people we provide services to

We were very aware that older people and those with disabilities were likely to be disproportionately affected by the the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Volunteer Action Group Virtual Network was established with 60 volunteer groups and colleagues across many service areas focussed on residents need; an estimated 700 volunteers supported their local groups. At our peak 76 committed colleagues from 15 different teams and three external organisations were supporting the community response.

Our Community Cohesion Team worked closely with the Test Trace Protect Service to raise awareness amongst the BAME community which early research indicated was likely to be disproportionately affected by coronavirus.

We are preparing for any future challenges COVID-19 may pose and working on new projects with partners such as a Digital Skills Development and a Telephone Befriending based shopping service.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	
Gender reassignment		Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	
Race	x		

Celebrating and Commemorating

It is important that we celebrate/recognise key equality events/campaigns that raise public awareness and show our respect as an organisation.

The Youth Service's Pride event took place in July at Caldicot Castle. The event was a hive of activity with live music and special guests including Lisa Power Co-founder of Stonewall and Emile Harris, Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist. The free event was part of the two day Monmouthshire Diversity Festival with a Family Fun Day taking place on the Sunday as part of the Diversity Weekend.

We held a Holocaust Memorial event at Chepstow Community Hub in January to remember the millions killed in the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. Chepstow School pupils talked about their visit to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Berlin and, from the Holocaust Memorial Day web site, we showed a film clip about the Nazi persecution of disabled people. To mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, there was a reading from "The Boy Who Followed His Father into Auschwitz" by Jeremy Dronfield. A short presentation from iNEED, the local refugee support charity, brought the event up-to-date.

VAWDASV (Violence against women domestic abuse and sexual violence) organised an event Caldicot Castle 25th Nov 2019.

Our library service purchased books to celebrate LGBT, the collection has a mixture of adult and young adult fiction titles.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	
Race	x		

Educating and Guiding

Working closely with both staff and Elected Members offering training, advice and guidance to enable them to make informed decisions

We regularly review and improve the Equality Impact Assessment process in conjunction with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and consider poverty issues in advance of the adoption of the Socio – economic Duty.

We undertake a cumulative impact assessment as part of the annual budget setting process. This looks at proposals which considered in isolation may have limited impact on groups, but when the impacts are aggregated, the potential impact could be more significant and result in disproportionate impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

The Social Justice Group established two task and finish groups to examine areas where members were lacking the appropriate level of information to inform policy choices. The Bullying Inclusion and Disability Inclusion Groups will report analyses and conclusions to the group. The remit of the two groups were agreed as a result of evidence arising out of the EHRC “Is Wales Fairer Report 2018” and the Well Being Assessment

The 'Equality Street' project, which originally started as an LGBTQ+ group, has since evolved into supporting a wide range of young people and provides a safe environment for people to relax, be themselves and help their peers and the wider community. The project has successfully helped its members develop communication skills and gain confidence, resulting in the group working to produce Gwent's first young person's Pride event – which was attended by more than 750 people. The project received a national award at the Youth Work Excellence Awards held in North in June 2019.

As part of Hate Crime Awareness Week – an educational puppet show was commissioned and took place in six Monmouthshire primary schools

Hate Crime Awareness training sessions were run for staff as part of the Talent Lab programme of staff development

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Doing the Basics

We must do what we are required to do under the Equality Act 2010

The recruitment and selection policy was reviewed and amended from an equality perspective and specifically to recognise the Disability Confident pledge and the Armed Forces Covenant

Produce an Annual Monitoring Report for the Welsh Language Standards

A new Community Cohesion Officer was appointed

A range of drop in sessions and open evenings were arranged for European Nationals affected by the European Settlement Status. The sessions provided an opportunity to gain an understanding of the Settlement Scheme, how to apply and how it could affect individuals, families and businesses.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Discharging the Specific Duties

The broad purpose of the specific duties is to help public bodies, such as this Council, in their performance of the general duty, and to aid transparency. In Wales the specific duties are set by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. This section describes how we have discharged these duties.

Setting equality objectives and publishing strategic equality plans

The strategic Equality Plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework within the constitution and must be approved by full council. The Strong Communities Select (Scrutiny) Committee annually reviews the annual monitoring report. A Social Justice Advisory Group has also been established, chaired by the Cabinet member, this group gives direction to the agenda and ensures that the council is progressing in its agreed aims.

Engagement

A detailed overview of the engagement undertaken, and how this was targeted to maximise update of groups with protected characteristics, is contained as appendix 2 of this report. Specific groups that we engage with include:

Access For All Forum, Action 50+ Abergavenny, Monmouth Visually Impaired Group.

The Access For All Forum restarted on the 23rd November 2018. The group has acted as a valued critical friend to the council and allowed disabled groups and individuals to discuss issues that affect them and ask questions of the council. More recently there have been issues in getting the public to engage and there are ongoing discussions on how to re-vitalise this important engagement forum.

The 50+ Forum has been rejuvenated and affords the members the opportunity to be a 'voice' for older people in Monmouthshire through consultations, questionnaires, surveys, dissemination of information, interaction between service users and service supplier, relating to the development and delivery of service.

Assessment of impact

Since the Equality Act introduced the requirement for organisations to conduct impact assessments of its decisions the council has repeatedly updated its guidance, templates and challenge processes to ensure that assessments are robust, up to date with any developments and user friendly. The current version includes the following legislative requirements to become a unified assessment document:

- Equality Act 2010 and the consideration of the needs of those with Protected characteristics,
- Well Being of Future Generations Act April 2016,
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Corporate Parenting
- Safeguarding
- Poverty (updated to reflect Socio-Economic Duty during 2020-21)

To ensure that the EQIA's are sufficiently robust to allow elected members to make properly informed decisions a sub group consisting of the Equality and Welsh Language Officer, the Sustainability Policy Officer and the Performance Manager are consultees on all reports sent to Cabinet or Council. They review and advise on the quality and robustness of all EQIA's accompanying reports requiring a decision. The group meet monthly to conduct further quality assurance and learn lessons

This small group plays a key role in scrutinising the proposals for savings in the annual budget setting process advising senior officers and managers on the quality of their reports, EQIA assessments and also the potential negative cumulative impact brought about by increases in fees and charges upon those least able to pay. This important piece of work has been introduced in anticipation of the forthcoming arrival of the Socio-economic Duty.

Equality information

For the Council the collection of relevant equality information is essential when it comes to knowing our service users, their needs and shaping the services that we need to provide. It is widely recognised that there remain significant challenges when it comes to collecting accurate information in relation to equality and diversity, particularly for some of the more "sensitive" of the protected characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender reassignment. We have developed a database on our intranet site to improve the availability of information on groups with the protected characteristics to improve the quality of our integrated impact assessments. The Council has remained firm in its support of the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

Employment information, pay differences and staff training

We have an on-line data collection system which provides all the information the council needs to understand the makeup of its staff in respect of the protected characteristics. Information on new starters is automatically entered on the system. The system itself is sufficiently robust; however the historic records are missing some key information where staff have not completed monitoring forms fully resulting in an incomplete understanding of the number of staff who have protected characteristics. All of the information that we are required to publish can be found on the council's website in the Equality and Diversity section at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Discipline and Grievance information 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020:-	
Number of employees who raised grievances	18
Number of employees had grievances raised against them	9
Number of employees subject to discipline procedures	42

Appendix 1 at the end of this document is the Council's Gender Pay Report for 2019 – 2020.

The Council's staff induction programme has a specific section which deals with the Equality Act 2010, equalities in general and the Welsh Language Standards. During the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face training was replaced by on line training.

Procurement

The Council's Procurement process uses the documentation of the Welsh Purchasing Consortium which has been developed to be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. Also Cabinet approved the sign up to the Code of Practice Ethical Employment in Supply Chains

Reporting and publishing

This report is being published as per the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will be available in alternative formats upon request from the 18th December 2020.

Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024.

April 2020 saw the council's third Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) adopted. It will run to the 31st March 2024 and aims to build on the good work carried out since the first SEP which was adopted in 2012. The latest plan has a set of strategic objectives which are designed to address issues that are recognised as having an adverse impact on people in Monmouthshire with protected characteristics.

This third version has taken in to account the very rigorous evidence base provided in the form of the Well being Assessment, Population Needs Assessment and the EHRC's "Is Wales Fairer 2018" report. This plan is far more focussed on addressing issues that have been identified as existing in Monmouthshire and involve a considerable element of partnership working to achieve those outcomes.

- **Objective 1:** Give children the best possible start in life overcoming barriers to attainment and opportunity
- **Objective 2:** Overcome inequalities in access to economic prosperity
- **Objective 3:** Create cohesive communities
- **Objective 4:** To provide services that are accessible to our public and support our workforce.
- **Objective 5:** Create a diverse and inclusive workforce
- **Objective 6:** Reduce the gender pay gap

Covid 19

The Coronavirus pandemic which began taking a hold in early to mid March 2020 has posed an unprecedented challenge to well-being and people's way of life. Some planned activity has needed to be paused as staff have been redeployed and spending targeted towards the council's coronavirus response.

Our purpose has evolved to reflect the new challenges, strategic aims have been developed to address the new challenge, and the organisation has been tasked with delivering these. It was vital that every person or family in crisis were aware that they could access support. This included providing hub schools for the children of key workers during lockdown, phoning all 3000 of the shielded households in the county, paying millions of pounds in grants to support local jobs businesses and co-ordinating community volunteering. Hundreds of members of staff were re-deployed so that the council could continue to safely deliver core services like waste collection and home care. If any good has come out of this pandemic it may be that it has magnified the vulnerability of people in times of crisis and has hopefully made the council and society more aware of their needs and the difficulties that are faced when times are hard.

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2020

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Introduction

The Gender Pay Gap Information Regulations require all employers with 250 or more employees to report their Gender Pay Gap annually, publishing on a national Government website as well as the organisations website. The Gender Pay Gap Information Regulations apply to employers in the public and private sector.

In addition to these new regulations, employers in the public sector are subject to a specific public sector equality duty in respect of their functions - The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. The regulations apply to all employers with 250 or more employees on the "snapshot" date. The "snapshot" date for the public sector is 31 March each year. Therefore, the Council is required to publish its gender pay gap for each year on the Monmouthshire County Council website and on the Government website (GOV.UK), no later than 31 March of the following year. Therefore, for the "snapshot" date of 31 March 2020, the findings must be published no later than 31 March 2021. The purpose of Gender Pay Gap reporting is to achieve greater gender equality across the UK and increase pay transparency. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported: The gender pay gap among all employees was 15.5% in 2020, down from 17.4% in 2019. Among fulltime employees the gender pay gap in April 2020 was 7.4% down from 9.0% in April 2019.

The gender pay gap is an analysis of gender distribution across the workforce. We must see our Gender Pay Gap Report as one important strand of our wider diversity & inclusion agenda. We believe that gender identity is broader than just 'men and women' and although the regulations require us to report in this way at Monmouthshire County Council we recognise and welcome colleagues of all gender identities.

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to the principle of equal pay for all employees by ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Equality Act. To achieve this the Council introduced Single Status and uses the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) job evaluation scheme to assess the value of all National Joint Council (NJC) jobs across the organisation, which provides evidence in support of the banding of each job within our grading structure. Salaries are paid according to band and incremental annual progression within the band occurs irrespective of an employee's gender.

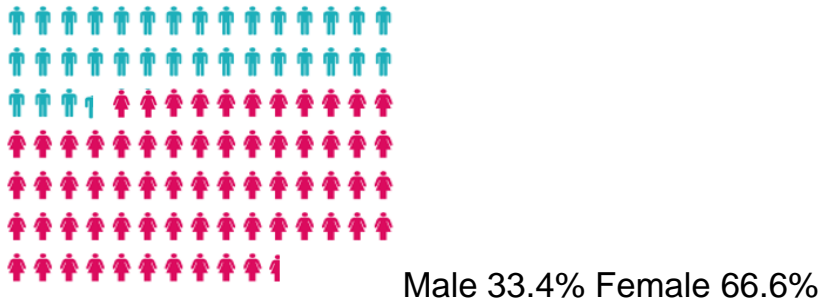
What do we have to report?

The regulations require employers to publish the following information:

- The mean gender pay gap;
- The median gender pay gap;
- The mean bonus pay gap;
- The median bonus pay gap;
- The relative proportions of male and female employees in each quartile pay band.

Workforce Profile

As of the 'snapshot date' of 31 March 2020 the Councils workforce profile for the purposes of this report was as follows:



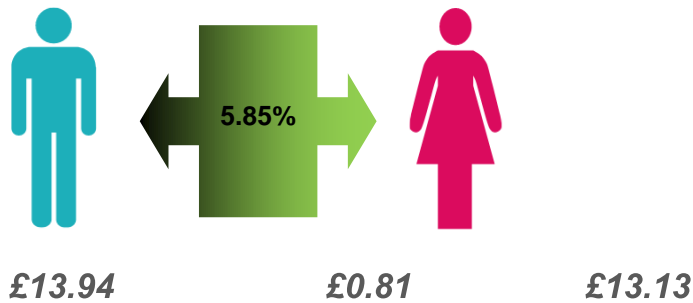
The Full Time and Part Time gender ratios were:

Part Time 5.48:1

Full Time 1:1.34

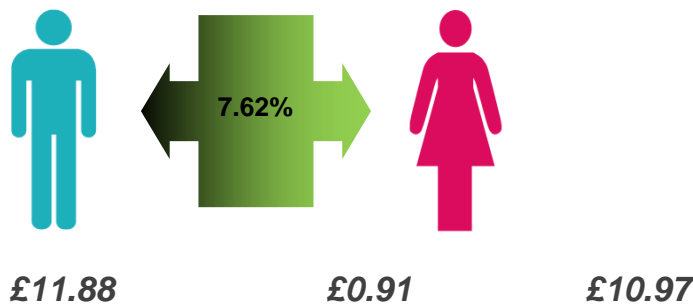


Mean Gender Pay Gap



The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women. National figure 7.4% (ONS)

Median Gender Pay Gap



The median pay gap is the difference between the mid points in the ranges of hourly earnings of men and women.



Bonus Pay

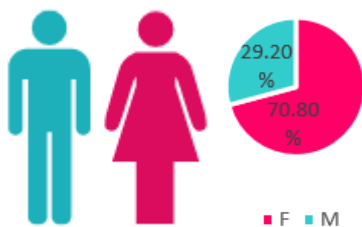
Monmouthshire County Council has not operated any bonus schemes since 2009 - upon the introduction of Single Status.

Bonus Pay Gap 0%

Quartile Pay Bands

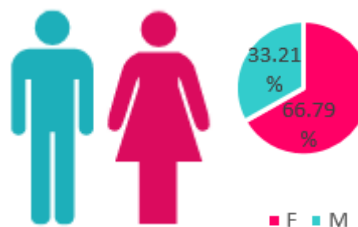
Lower Pay Quartile

£7,524.23 - £20,343.99



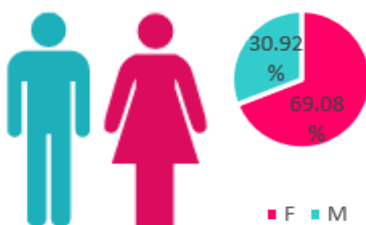
Lower Middle Pay Quartile

£20,343.99 - £23,836



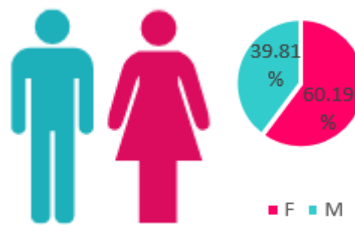
Upper Middle Pay Quartile

£23,836 - £30,507.11



Upper Quartile

£30,507.11 - £116,744.29



Conclusions

Quartile Analysis shows, that in the Upper Middle there has been an decrease in the percentage of males from 33.72% to 30.92%, however there is a relatively stable proportion of female to male as you would expect based on the overall proportion of workers being 33.40% male to 66.60% female. The proportion of males to females increases in the Upper quartiles.

Factors affecting the Gender Pay Gap

The pay gap is strongly affected by the makeup of the Council's workforce and its distribution.

The majority of the Council's staff are in the lower grades, this means that the overall pay gap is distorted, reflecting workforce composition rather than pay inequalities. This is particularly evident in Cleaning, Catering and Social Care, which has a large female workforce who in general terms work more part time hours, as opposed to roles dominated by males in areas such as Highways, Waste and Landscape who tend to work full time hours. Therefore, the Gender Pay Gap is as much a societal gap as a pure pay gap.

The Council has a very stable workforce and for 2019/2020 had a low turnover rate at **9.43%**, meaning there are only a few vacancies that give an opportunity for changes in the makeup of the workforce.

Evidence from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and the Labour Force Survey suggests that coronavirus factors did not have a notable impact on the gender pay gap in 2020, and that changes reported reflect underlying employment patterns.

What we have done

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to equality in the workplace having already taken several measures to ensure that it is a fair and equitable employer by:

- Ensuring equal pay for work of equal value using job evaluation.
- Monmouthshire County Council's grading structure has 13 grades with five increments in ten of the grades, three increments in two of the grades and four increments in one of the grades. Grades span across SCP 1- 51 with associated salaries from £17,842 (SCP 1) to £55,195 (SCP 51). More information about the GLPC and the grades can be found in the Council's Single Status Collective Agreement.
The implementation of the new pay spine (with effect from 1 April 2019) introduced a minimum spinal column point of £9.00 per hour (£9.25 with effect from 1 April 2020).
- Promoting and supporting flexible working for employees within the organisation, irrespective of gender. Examples include: job share, part time working, flexible working, flexible retirement, term-time working, and working from home.

The Council is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender

pay gap is the result of the roles in which male and females work within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract.

Appendix 2

Communications to Monmouthshire residents with protected characteristics 2019-20

May 2019

- A Boot decorating, upcycling and planting community engagement project was held at Tintern Old Station to encourage people to visit Tintern Old Station as part of their training for the MacMillan Mighty Hike. All ages were welcome to come along to enjoy the craft and gardening activity over Whitsun half term. This was popular with the Old Station volunteer group and families with young children. Planted and decorated boots were displayed at the Old Station all summer E.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2324885337532744>

June 2019

- Celebrating volunteers of all ages and abilities as part of Volunteers week, encouraging other people to volunteer for their wellbeing. Link to Bridges Community Car scheme and volunteering. E.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/430510830833179>
- ACE Time to be Kind campaign – this was targeted at children and young people. Link to ACE Support Hub Cymru e.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/542704256134712>
- Owls and Acorns Intergenerational project with children meeting elderly people to enjoy crafting – e.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/194964854781093>

July 2019

- Monmouthshire Games – promoting summer activities for children
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2278842008864339>
- Local Development Replacement Plan Engagement across all channels – everyone asked to share their thoughts and feedback either online or at community drop in sessions e.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/324101125208273>

August 2019

- School Holiday Enrichment Programme - Flying start summer play scheme e.g.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2496491103740809>

September 2019

- Usk Show – Marquee at Usk Show to engage with the community and celebrate services and encourage people to get involved in their community inc. MonLife, Volunteering, Countryside, Recycling and Waste. Foster carer fostering event held at thank you event in the Marquee at the end of the Show to thank existing foster carers.
- Accessing council services digitally as part of recycling week – promoting Monty (Monmouthshire’s Bilingual ChatBot) and the My Monmouthshire app.
<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/391227954896729>

October 2019

- Give Dog Fouling the Red Card – a campaign to encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs – particularly on sports fields where children will be playing e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2615962525127983>
- Official Opening of the Reuse Shop in Llanfoist – encouraging people to recycle and buy reused items at Llanfoist’s Civiv Amenity site e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2828928400453491>
- Community and Partnership Development Team – encouraging people to get involved in community engagement e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/462257084389841> all groups with different needs across the County were involved both digitally and face to face.
- Monmouthshire celebrated the European Day of Languages in Monmouthshire’s Schools – e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/388340035194944>

November 2019

- Caldicot Fireworks – face to face engagement with visitors at Caldicot Castle’s Fireworks display to promote opportunities to become a home carer or foster carer in Monmouthshire. Flyers distributed and people invited to drop in sessions the following week.
- Home Meals Team – how they are helping to tackle loneliness, a call for people to get in touch
- <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/761058381023672>

December 2020

- Remembering Day – support for people who have been bereaved at Christmas. Call to action featured for any in need of bereavement help and support e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/2451613041719377>

Monmouthshire County Council Budget Engagement 2020 / 2021

The budget engagement process incorporated a suite of communications to; provide information on the financial situation, share the proposed ideas and enable residents to share their views.

Opportunities were created for communities to become informed so that they were able to participate and engage with us at a level appropriate for them. Our mechanisms allowed people to receive as much or as little information as they felt necessary.

Website

A Budget 20/21 page was published <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/budget-2020-2021/>

The page provided a comprehensive overview of the financial situation and links to the proposals from the cabinet reports. It included a video presentation along with list of public meetings for residents to attend.

Social media

Opportunities were created for people to engage (digitally or face to face). A Social media video was produced highlighting the key elements -

<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/704735143266154>

Press release

A press release was issued to local media outlets, Wales wide and national media. The release contained information on some of the key proposals that would affect residents.

Online Survey

A short online survey was available for residents to feedback thoughts on the proposals.

Public meetings

They were held at the following times and locations:

- 14th January at Chepstow Library
- 22nd January at Abergavenny Library

Targeted meetings

An Access for All meeting was held on 17th January for people with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, older people and interested organisations to join and share their thoughts and feedback.

Engage to change

The Council met with young people from across Monmouthshire's schools Engage to Change Group to capture their feedback on the budget proposals at their Youth Conference event on 24th January

Twitter and Facebook

The council's social media channels were used to share information about the range of opportunities residents could find out more and get involved in the budget engagement process.

Short You Tube clip

A councillor was filmed explaining to residents the impact of the budget situation and answering some of the important queries that have emerged from residents. The clip was well received and was shared on social media, You Tube and embedded in to the budget page of the website. -

<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/704735143266154>

January 2020

- 20 Reasons to Foster in 2020 – targeting people who could offer children and young people a kind, loving home
- Community Café connecting people and ending loneliness – opportunity for people of all ages to pop in for a cuppa and catch-up

<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/650907412367467>

February 2020

- Voice technology to help people of all abilities to connect with the council's Alexa service – e.g.

<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/237168427318568>

March 2020 - COVID Response – support for everyone and a call out for community volunteers to get involved.

<https://www.facebook.com/523872957647147/videos/1241277702910120>

- Existing digital channels that were proven and tested were quickly used to engage with people:
 - The Chief Executive set the leadership agenda from his personal Twitter account, leading the strategic response, connecting with partners and setting a personal tone to encourage people to get involved.
 - @MonmouthshireCC's Facebook and Twitter channels were an excellent way to communicate with the target demographic group of 25 – 45 year olds.

- Videos, graphic social media tiles, video diaries and Facebook Lives created awareness, engagement and encouraged people to get involved.
- All communications were linked back to the monmouthshire.gov.uk website.
- Monty, Monmouthshire's Facebook Chatbot responded to all requests 24/7.
- Emails were sent to existing volunteers, colleagues, members and town and community councillors to get involved.
- An on-going Public relations plan was delivered to all local press to raise awareness, reinforce key messages and reassure people without access to digital communications.
- 586 people contacted MCC needing support with shopping, prescriptions, dog walking and a friendly person to speak to. This, ultimately, kept people alive.
- 246 volunteers were recruited directly through MCC (23% over target), hundreds more approached the COVID-19 groups directly within two weeks of the launch.
- Communications enabled a comprehensive network of 60 volunteer groups to be set up across Monmouthshire made up of 700 volunteers who contacted the groups directly.
- One COVID-19 volunteer group in Chepstow, for example, averaged 700 errands a month for isolated people during March, April and May.
- The neighbourhood networks created connected people, improved their wellbeing and sense of belonging - new friendships were made.