

**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

**14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2010**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY  
P.GRAHAM**

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**PART 1 – Doc. Code: PRB-140110-REP-CE-PG**

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# **1 Neath Port Talbot Community Plan 2010 – 2020** **Public Consultation Paper**

## **Purpose**

To provide, for information purposes, an updated version of the Working Draft of a revised Community Plan for the period 2010 to 2020; upon which a three month public consultation period has commenced.

## **Background**

This is still very much work in progress and this is why the document is not being given the title of a draft Plan, instead it is a consultation paper. The message we want to give to partners and citizens is that they still have a very real opportunity to shape its content and structure.

## **Overview of Revisions**

The working draft document was discussed at the Annual Community Plan Partnership Seminar on 4<sup>th</sup> November. The workshop notes, which capture the discussions, together with a summary of the presentations delivered at the seminar, are being made widely available to elected Members, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service, partner organisations and seminar delegates.

The revised consultation paper has been updated to take account of some of the issues raised at the Seminar and some individual comments received prior to the seminar. During December 2009, it was considered by the Local Service Board, which comprises of the leaders and chief executives of the public service agencies.

Overall, partners support the production of a much more focussed and concise document, with its succinct, unifying vision statement.

It is pleasing to have received so many useful comments from partners who attended the seminar. Some asked for more specific and detailed information to be included in a revised Plan. However, it is not possible to go into great detail or include everyone's priorities because the main purpose is to set out a shared vision and high-level intentions, with more information being available in other supporting documents and plans.

The seminar report, which details the comments received, has been forwarded to the Council's Community Plan lead officers for them to ensure that the

relevant supporting partnerships address the issues raised during the implementation of their themes.

### **List of Background Papers**

No background papers.

### **Wards Affected**

All

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Neath Port Talbot Community Plan 2010 – 2020  
Public Consultation Paper

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**Neath Port Talbot Community Plan  
2010 – 2020**

**Public Consultation Paper**

**January 2010**

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COMMUNITY PLAN 2010 TO 2020**

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION PAPER**

### **FOREWORD**

I am proud to present this consultation paper on our Community Plan for the period 2010 to 2020 which is being launched for a three month consultation period. The revised Plan will be published in the spring of 2010. This is the key partnership Plan for the County Borough, setting out a shared vision and priorities for the next ten years.

As part of the Community Plan review, the Local Service Board, which comprises of the leaders and chief executives of the public service agencies in the County Borough, has considered changes to the Plan and discussions have been held with the County Borough Council's elected Members and senior officers to help identify priorities for a revised Plan. We have changed the Plan to take account of the important views expressed by over 120 partner organisations at the Community Plan Seminar held in November 2009. We have also taken account of the public's views expressed through a Citizens' Panel consultation. In addition, consideration has been given to the range of plans, strategies and evidence bases, which underpin the existing Plan and the evolving Local Development Plan.

The law requires us to produce a Plan and the Welsh Assembly Government produces guidance for us to follow.

### **Challenges, Vision and Priorities**

Key challenges, a draft vision and thematic priorities for the next four years have been developed. For ease of reference, the existing seven Community Plan themes have been applied. Measures for monitoring progress will be identified once the priorities have been agreed.

Existing data sets and information drawn from national and local statistics and needs assessments have been used to produce a 'snapshot' of some of the key issues facing the County Borough. This has been used as a context for the priorities which follow.

The aim has been to identify from the existing key plans and strategies the elements of a vision and to express where we want to be. The challenge has been to consider this from a broad partnership perspective because this is a key strategic document for the County Borough Council and its partners. However, the perspective of local people must be paramount, so efforts have been made to include meaningful, tangible priorities using straightforward language. Further work will need to be undertaken to fully achieve this.

## **Input**

Your views are sought on the following issues:

- (a) Does the draft vision reflect accurately what from the public's perspective we would like Neath Port Talbot to be like in 2020?
- (b) Do the detailed priorities for each of the themes reflect what we hope to achieve over the next four to five years?

I look forward to receiving your comments and views about how we can work together to improve the County Borough and the lives of all citizens who live, work and volunteer within its communities.

Councillor Ali Thomas, Leader  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
January 2010

# **COMMUNITY PLAN 2010 TO 2020**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **KEY CHALLENGES FOR NEATH PORT TALBOT**

People living and working in the County Borough have said it is a good place to live because generally they feel safe; the environment is good; there are reasonable job opportunities and they can access affordable decent housing and good public services.

However, a revised Community Plan cannot dwell on the significant progress already made, but must focus on looking ahead and facing a number of significant challenges, e.g. increasing demands on health and social care services for older people and on children's services and a reduction in job prospects. These issues are reflected in key facts about the County Borough.

#### **Key facts about Neath Port Talbot**

- The County Borough has a total population of 137,600. It is projected that by 2031 the population will have increased by 17.2% compared to the 2006 baseline population - an additional 23,600 people and 3% above the Welsh average increase. This projected growth must be treated with caution because it is based on past trends. It is probably more realistic to anticipate that approximately a third of this population growth will be realised. However, without doubt, there will be a steady growth in the number of people over the age of 65 and over the age of 85;
- The Welsh language, culture and heritage are particularly valued within the Valley communities with some 20% of the population able to speak Welsh;
- At the time of the 2001 Census, black and minority ethnic groups accounted for 1.1% of the total resident population;
- 60% of the population are of working age; but less than 70% of these are economically active - the lowest percentage in Wales. 6.8% of the working age population are unemployed, which is in

line with the Welsh average and levels of self employment are the lowest in Wales;

- The gross weekly pay for full time workers is below the Wales average and average household incomes are significantly below the average for the Swansea Bay area. There is a heavy dependence on benefits for a large number of the working age population, with 27.2% claiming benefits, compared to 20.4% in Wales. Incapacity benefit claims are particularly high;
- The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008 highlights the challenges of poverty and deprivation, especially amongst isolated communities. Of the 91 small geography areas in the County Borough (lower super output areas), 17 were in the top 10% most deprived in Wales;
- In 2007/08, there were approximately 9000 secondary school pupils in Neath Port Talbot. However, currently, the number of pupils on primary and secondary school rolls continues to fall year on year. There is a significant backlog of repairs and improvements to the school estate. In the County Borough, some 22% of primary school children were entitled to free school meals, which is a strong indicator of poverty;
- In 2008, the number of 16+ students gaining qualifications was high with 80.5% achieving 2 A levels grades A-C - the joint third highest attainment level in Wales. 88% of pupils achieved 5 GCSE grades A\*-G, which is the sixth highest in Wales. However, 3.7% of pupils did not achieve any qualifications - the ninth highest percentage in Wales;
- During 2006/07, 184 children were registered on the Child Protection Register, an increase of 31% from the previous year. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, there were 161 children on the Register. The main reason for placement on the Register was neglect, by far the largest single category of abuse, accounting for a half of all children. In 2009, there was a significant rise in the numbers of Looked After Children and children whose names appear on the Register, resulting in increased demand on social work services;



- A major challenge is tackling poor health, especially when life expectancy in Neath Port Talbot is amongst the worst in Great Britain. According to the 2001 Census, nearly 30% of the County Borough's population suffer from a limiting long term illness, which was the second highest in Wales;
- The County Borough continues to experience a reduction in the overall levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Unsurprisingly, crime levels are highest in the large urban areas; with the most common type of crime being criminal damage;
- Local environmental issues are many and varied. Efforts continue to be made to meet targets for keeping streets and highways clean and for reusing or recycling municipal waste. During 2008/09, 42% of municipal waste was sent to landfill – one of the best performances in Wales. A particular environmental concern is particulate pollution. Whilst air quality is improving, during 2008, there were 35 days in the County Borough when air pollution was moderate to high; and
- The County Borough has the smallest total road length in the South West Wales region. However, it has a number of intersections of the M4 and has the largest number of motorway kilometres in the region. There is a significant backlog of highway repair and improvement schemes.

The above - drawn from national/local statistics and needs assessments - demonstrate the diverse range of challenges facing the County Borough, which have to be tackled within and beyond the lifetime of a revised Community Plan. The vision and priorities that follow need to be considered against this background.

## **COMMUNITY PLAN 2010 TO 2020**

### **DELIVERING TOGETHER**

We need all partners, including citizens and public, private and voluntary sector organisations to be jointly committed to delivering the vision and priorities in this Plan. This is everyone's Plan and all other strategies and plans need to be complementary to help deliver it.

Success requires strong community and political leadership, effective partnership working, good information sharing and meaningful community engagement. Continuous service improvement is vital to ensure services are modern, responsive, accessible, efficient and are delivered across organisational and geographical boundaries. More of the same is not an option and this includes having a stronger emphasis on preventative work in service delivery.

The commitment and involvement of all citizens and communities is key if this Plan is to really make a difference. Whether we live, work or volunteer in the County Borough, we all have to take greater responsibility for our individual actions, ensuring they do not have a negative impact upon others and the community.

The three guiding principles of sustainable development, social inclusion and fairness underpin this Plan. This means working across the themes in the Plan, making the necessary connections and working with citizens from the many diverse groups that exist within the County Borough.

We must take account of those who may be excluded from services or are in danger of being discriminated against due to age, gender, disability, caring responsibilities, race, language, sexuality, marital status or religion/belief.

This approach to delivering the Plan's priorities will help support healthy, sustainable, independent and integrated communities within the County Borough.

## **COMMUNITY PLAN 2010 TO 2020**

### **THE VISION FOR NEATH PORT TALBOT**

Forecasting the future for local people and their communities is not an easy task. It is difficult to see three or four years ahead, let alone ten years and the current global economic outlook only serves to magnify the uncertainties.

However, it is absolutely evident that public sector budgets are going to come under severe pressure for the foreseeable future and that the challenge of sustaining and improving services will therefore be testing for all service providers. As a consequence, public services need to be more flexible and adaptable and providers must collaborate ever more closely together to deliver better outcomes and greater public value. Opportunities such as that afforded by Convergence Funding must be grasped with both hands. It is therefore vital that, as part of the Community Plan, all public service providers review what they do and how they do it to ensure that maximum effectiveness and efficiency is achieved.

Nonetheless, there is much to be positive about. But we must also be realistic and focussed on delivering outcomes for citizens and communities which reflect people's hopes and aspirations for themselves, their families and their local communities and are meaningful for the wider public audience. This will result in more people and local communities getting involved in planning the public services they receive and having more influence over decisions that affect their quality of life and the well being of their communities.

The Local Service Board is a key vehicle for driving this process and ensuring that the Community Plan vision is realised, holding all partners to account, monitoring and reporting progress to local communities.

The Community Plan is supported by a wide range of more specific partnership plans and strategies, such as the Children and Young People's Plan, the Health Social Care & Well-being Plan, the Community Safety Plan and the Local Development Plan.

Most of these have much shorter timescales than the Community Plan, normally three or four years, and must be drivers for improving services in the manner described above so that all service providers share a collaborative agenda. This will lead us to the vision for Neath Port Talbot in 2020.

The current Community Plan vision statement says:

“Working together we will achieve a more prosperous, better educated, healthier, greener, safer and more confident future for the people and communities of Neath Port Talbot.”

Whilst this statement has stood the test of time, and will remain valid up to 2020, it focuses mainly on what Community Plan partners will do for local people and communities rather than addressing real outcomes. A more citizen-centred expression of this vision is suggested:

**“We want Neath Port Talbot to be a place where local services help people look after themselves, each other and their communities; with greater opportunity for all – in a greener, healthier and safer environment.”**

If this is our vision, which is for the next 10 years, it means that by 2020:

- More people will have access to quality health and social care services that reflect need and are provided as close to home as possible. The causes of ill-health will have been tackled more effectively with more people adopting healthier lifestyles through, for example, cultural, leisure and sporting facilities. Those who are disabled, ill or frail will be living longer in their own homes with support from their local community and its services.
- Children will enjoy better physical and mental health and will be effectively safeguarded from abuse and neglect. Integrated children’s services, with a greater focus on prevention, will help reduce the numbers of children in need, at risk and on the Child Protection Register.
- Good quality, more affordable housing and greater choice will have increased with accommodation support if required.

- The condition of schools across the County Borough and the quality of provision - particularly in early years and in a number of school clusters – will have significantly improved with the Schools Improvement Programme well advanced. There will be fewer pupils excluded and more with special needs educated in their local schools.

The quality of provision and achievement in the tertiary sector will also have improved providing greater opportunities to continue their education and training beyond 16. There will be more opportunities for family learning, with young parents becoming better educated.

- In recognition of the ageing population, a diverse range of up skilling, learning and training opportunities will be available, to help older people access jobs, be independent and remain healthy.
- People will feel increasingly safe and confident in their local communities and town centres both during the day and particularly, at night. Crime levels will be low and anti-social behaviour will be tackled through both intervention and prevention programmes.
- We expect that the local economy will be strong and diverse, retaining a core manufacturing sector supported by a growing knowledge-based sector, built upon better skills and local research and design activity, and specialist sectors such as energy, social enterprise and tourism.

The County Borough will be business friendly, encouraging green businesses and sustainable construction. Small indigenous businesses will be flourishing, supporting all sectors of the economy and there will be a stronger regional economy resulting from the successful application of Convergence Funding and based upon the Wales Spatial Plan.

- Levels of economic inactivity will have reduced with a variety of support available to help people into work – and young people will have better opportunities for getting work, continuing their education or accessing training opportunities, including apprenticeships.

- M4 congestion will have been relieved by the completion of the peripheral distributor road network and more comprehensive public and community transport will be available, whether for work or pleasure, providing more choice for the citizen and reduced private car usage. Rail, bus and road links will also be better integrated and a network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths maintained, with more businesses providing facilities for cyclists.
- Neath Port Talbot's carbon footprint will be significantly lower with energy being used more efficiently and air, water and land pollution will be improved resulting in a cleaner and well maintained local environment with people and local communities taking ownership. Waste production will be reduced with levels of recycling increased and minimum use of landfill.

## **COMMUNITY PLAN 2010 TO 2020**

### **PRIORITIES**

You have told us that a good place to live has low levels of crime; affordable decent housing; clean streets; good health services; activities for young people; good job prospects; and good public transport.

You have also told us what **most** needs improving in Neath Port Talbot and this includes:

- ✓ Activities for young people
- ✓ Road and pavement repairs
- ✓ Job prospects
- ✓ Facilities for young children
- ✓ Clean streets
- ✓ Public transport

We will act upon what matters to you and turn our wider vision for Neath Port Talbot into action. We will achieve our shared ten year vision by having the following medium term priorities, which are all equally important and cross cutting:

### **Health, Social Care and Wellbeing - Where we want to be by 2014**

- More people, with the appropriate support, look after themselves, each other and their communities with the emphasis on healthier lifestyles and preventative services.
- Residential and nursing homes are modern and fit for purpose.
- Social and affordable housing has been, and continues to be, improved and modernised and there is also more support for everyone in independent accommodation. In particular, gaps in provision for young people and the homeless are reduced.
- Intensive support for families with complex needs is available, accessible and effective and more joined up health and social care services are provided between children and adult services.

- Health and social care services are integrated and citizen centred, delivered collaboratively across agencies. There will be a particular emphasis upon tackling the factors leading to children at risk of abuse and neglect and maximising independent living for older people with individualised, cost effective and high quality care and support.
- Services have been and continue to be improved for mental health and well being, physical and sensory disability and carers; helping safeguard the needs of vulnerable adults and children.

### **Education and Lifelong Learning - Where we want to be by 2014**

- The initial phases of the Schools Improvement Programme are implemented with educational attainment improving, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2, with literacy and numeracy skills improving.
- More vulnerable children and young people are engaging in school and achieving, including those being looked after.
- All young people are prepared for work as a consequence of planning for the educational needs of 14-19 year olds being well established, with greater emphasis on skills in disciplines such as information technology, resulting in fewer young people not in education, employment or training. There is a greater emphasis upon vocational opportunities, including apprenticeships.
- There is a broad range of skills development, learning and training opportunities on offer across all ages.

### **Community Safety - Where we want to be by 2014**

- Public reassurance is secured by reduced crime and the fear of crime.
- Partnership activity is focussed on those few offenders who commit a substantial number of crimes.
- There is a zero tolerance, early intervention approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.



- Drug and alcohol problems are being tackled, with related crimes being reduced due to quality prevention and treatment services being in place.
- Services and support for victims of domestic abuse are improving with higher conviction rates for perpetrators.
- Environmental crime, including fly tipping is further reduced due to initiatives such as the Pride in our Communities project.
- The number of people suffering from the activities of unscrupulous traders, with some becoming the victims of crime, is reduced.

### **Economic Prosperity - Where we want to be by 2014**

- European Union Convergence and other funding opportunities are maximised to build stronger local and regional economies.
- Major strategies and programmes such as Coed Darcy Urban Village, Baglan Energy Park, Port Talbot Docks and the Town Centre and the new University 'Innovation Campus' are substantially complete with additional opportunities available in other areas.
- The benefits of the Welsh Assembly Government's Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area and the County Borough's Western Valleys Strategy are being maximised, including the development of Rheola; the regeneration of Neath and Pontardawe Town Centres.
- The number of people not in work has reduced due to the success of initiatives such as the South West Wales Workways Scheme, the Coastal Project and Local Employment Partnerships.
- Young, high technology companies have emerged from the Sustainable Technologies Technium.
- Social enterprise becomes an increasingly important element of the local economy linked to the provision of other public services. This will be helped by forging better links between the different sectors, so that service gaps, and who is best placed to meet them, are identified.

- Tourism opportunities are rolled out for the Neath, Dulais, Swansea, Upper Amman and Upper Afan Valleys in keeping with the heritage and natural assets of the areas concerned.
- Maximise social clauses in plans and service contracts which increase the number of local jobs and promote sustainable procurement and collection systems for goods and materials, which preferably are locally sourced.

### **Transport - Where we want to be by 2014**

- The Stage 2 Port Talbot Peripheral Distributor Road is completed.
- The Port Talbot Parkway and Neath Railway Stations have been improved and are more accessible.
- Successful public and community transport, including taxi services, is providing local communities and employment sites with a range of travel options.
- The highway network is efficient and the maintenance backlog reduced.

### **Environment - Where we want to be by 2014**

- Our carbon footprint is significantly reduced because we are reducing the contributory factors, as well as adapting to the effects of climate change. Energy resources are also used efficiently with actions to reduce climate change being implemented to include rapid responses to flooding and flood risk.
- The public's sense of responsibility to re-use, minimise, reduce and recycle waste is being demonstrated, with national targets being exceeded.
- To improve the health and well-being of all citizens; healthy and clean air, land and water are secured by robust environmental management systems and the diversity of local environments and habitats is successfully managed, protected and enhanced.

- The quality of the built environment is improved and energy efficient street lighting provided, which also helps people feel safer.
- All citizens have safe, accessible green spaces within walking distance from their homes.

### **Confident Communities - Where we want to be by 2014**

- People's sense of independence, pride and confidence are maximised, encouraging a greater sense of community cohesion.
- Poverty in all aspects of people's lives, particularly where it affects children, continues to be tackled.
- The Welsh language, culture and heritage are celebrated, giving a strong sense of place and identity.
- Fairness and diversity is valued and reflected in public services.
- The impact of public services upon the environment, including the physical infrastructure required for sustainable communities, will be reflected in the Local Delivery Plan and planning processes.
- Active citizenship and levels of community engagement is increased.

## **2 Progress on Race Equality 2008/2009**

### **Purpose of Report**

To consider progress made on race equality since 2008.

### **Background**

The Council has a legislative duty, and a moral obligation, to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations between persons of different racial groups.

The report attached at Appendix 1 outlines the progress that has been made in taking forward these three overlapping strands of the statutory general duty for the promotion of race equality.

### **Appendices**

Progress on Race Equality 2008/2009 - Appendix 1

### **Wards Affected**

All

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## **Progress on Race Equality 2008/2009**

### **Introduction**

The whole ethos of equality and fairness is something that the Council endeavours to attain across all the Equalities strands.

The duty to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations between persons of different racial groups is both a legislative and moral obligation. It is the belief that every resident of, or visitor to, Neath Port Talbot should be treated with fairness and respect and have equal opportunity to access services and employment.

### **Progress and Developments**

- Young people have been working with Communities First youth workers in Neath on street art with the theme of inclusion and incorporating different religious symbols.
- The Council continues to be involved with the annual Holocaust Memorial.
- Libraries continue to support the communities of Neath Port Talbot with collections of materials in a variety of languages.
- The Council continues to contribute to Swansea Bay Racial Equality Council's (SBREC) core funding and there is senior elected Member and officer representation on SBREC's Executive Committee.
- Senior prefects from Glanafan Comprehensive School took part in the mayoral citizenship project which focussed on global citizenship and cultural diversity.
- Members of the BME Forum have been working with Social Services Community Care officers to develop and progress policies that impact on BME communities in Neath Port Talbot.
- The Port Talbot Tigers continue to support the BME Forum and have increased their sphere of activity to include Under 16's Boys Fitness Sessions, Girl's Activities, Women's Activities and organising a Neath Port Talbot Multicultural Event.

## **Overview of Progress**

The introduction of the Equality Impact Assessment Framework has enabled services to assess all new policies, as well as current policies and services, to determine their relevance to equalities and to ensure that any adverse effects on equalities groups are avoided or at least mitigated.

The assessment framework is becoming a routine part of policy development and the information collected will provide a significant foundation for future service development and provision.

With the review of the Neath Port Talbot Community Plan the executive reporting mechanism will also require revision to reflect the changes in priorities. While the 'impact assessment criteria' may change, equalities will remain as an essential part of this mechanism.

The Council is currently involved in an Equality Improvement Framework pilot project with the support of the WLGA, the aim of which is to produce a set of equality values and a vision statement as a precursor to the development of a single equality scheme. This work will help inform the review of the Community Plan and the implementation of other strategic plans.

With the new requirements placed on Local Government it is timely to give further consideration to how equalities can be embedded in new ways of working, i.e. lean systems reviews, new business planning processes and the changes in the Wales Programme for Improvement.

## **Consultation**

The BME Forum continues to be well supported and remains an effective vehicle for communication between the BME communities, the Council, Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service and the Police.

An example of the Forum's involvement is its work with social services officers to ensure that the needs of people from black and ethnic minority communities have a higher profile. As a result they have agreed on three priorities for action; improving information, consideration on how best to encourage foster carers from the BME community and increasing operational staff awareness of cultural and ethnic need of the BME community.

The Council is keen to encourage greater consultation with all equalities groups and is currently looking on how best to take this forward in more effective ways. Without losing the momentum created with the BME Forum, joint consultation and events are being considered as being a more inclusive way to engage and promote cohesive communities within Neath Port Talbot.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring remains an area which requires further consideration. While the Council has introduced a monitoring system its application has not been universal. As a result there are some services that neither know their customers nor the effect that the services have on the various communities and/or equalities groups. Consequently services may not be as effective or indeed provided at all for certain groups. However, in order to rectify this there are ongoing discussions to explore the requirement and greater application of the monitoring system and to fully realise the opportunity such systems can make to both the public and services areas alike.

The Council continues to have a Cabinet Member specifically designated as Equalities Champion and the Heads of Service Equalities Group continues to promote and support a consistent and corporate approach to equalities across the Council

Equalities issues continue to be regularly scrutinised and reviewed by the Council's Scrutiny Committees from both a corporate and a service-specific perspective. However, with the new emerging scrutiny arrangements there is greater opportunity to take a new approach in scrutinising equalities. Discussions are ongoing to explore the opportunities.

### **Access to Information and Services**

There continues to be little evidence or call for documentation to be translated into community languages although some information has been translated on a limited basis e.g. information on how to get involved with the Local Development Plan.

Presentations on a diverse range of topics continue to be requested by the Forum and are enthusiastically received. Services provided by both the Council and its partners have been topics for the Forum and have allowed representatives to gain knowledge and information that can be passed back to their respective communities.

The Forum and the Council are eager to work closer together to ensure the needs of the BME communities are considered appropriately in policy development and the provision of services.

### **Training**

Equalities training has been a feature of the Council's commitment to ensuring its employees are prepared, able and conscious to equalities issues when providing services. To this end training has been successfully provided to Heads of Service and managers. Discussions are ongoing as to the best method of rolling out training to frontline staff.

The corporate training programme is currently being revised to include both specific and general equalities training sessions, the content and focus of which continues to be considered. In light of the changing climate in equalities the Council recognises that training will continue to evolve and therefore will remain a priority.

### **Complaints**

As in previous years, survey forms, distributed as part of the complaints procedure, are not routinely completed and returned by complainants. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether a complaint has an equalities element unless equality is the subject of the complaint. There have been no complaints with a racial dimension during this period which is indicative of the feedback received from the BME Forum.

The complaints policy is currently under review and any changes will take into account the equalities dimension. It is anticipated that the procedure for the reporting of racial incidents will remain the same.

### **The Employment Duty**

The ethnic categories are those used in the 2001 Census. For analyses purposes the data has grouped and the term black and minority ethnic (BME) has been used to include all ethnic groups apart from White British (including Welsh, English and Scottish).

The number of black and minority ethnic employees has increased slightly from an average figure of 45 employees (0.6%) in 2006/2007 to 67.5 employees (0.9%) in 2008/2009. This is also the case when schools- based staff are excluded from the figures, where the average figure for 2006/2007 of 39 (0.8%) has increased in 2008/2009 to 50.3 (1.1%).



## Breakdown of BME Employees by Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Percentage of BME Total
Other Ethnic Group	23%
Irish	13%
Indian	9.1%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	9.1%
Asian Other	8.1%
Mixed White & Asian	8.1%
Black British	5.1%
Black Caribbean	5.1%
Chinese	4%
Pakistani	4%
White & Asian	4%
Bangladeshi	3%
Black – African	1%
Black – Other	1%
Mixed White & Black African	1%

According to the 2001 Census, 2.4% of the local population is from a Black or minority ethnic group, as defined above. The largest groups are “Other White” (0.9%) and Irish (0.5%), followed by Indian (0.18%), White & Black Caribbean (0.16%) and Bangladeshi (0.12%) and Chinese (0.12%).

In 2004, eight former communist countries, including Poland which accounts for 60% of the applicants to the UK’s Worker Registration Scheme, joined the European Union. The effect of this on the population of Neath Port Talbot is not yet known.

The proportion of black and minority ethnic employees ranges from 0% in Chief Executives to 0.7% in Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning, 0.8% in Environment, 0.9% in Finance & Corporate Services and 1.2% in Social Services, Health and Housing.

The distribution of black and minority ethnic employees by grade over the past year was 1.7% for posts graded 35 and above, 0.9% for posts graded scale point 14-34 and 0.7% for posts graded scale point 4-13. There are no BME Directors or Heads of Service.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

Out of 113 cases requiring formal action under the Disciplinary Procedure two cases involved BME employees

## Grievance and Harassment

There were no grievance or harassment complaints lodged by employees from a BME ethnic background.

## Sickness

The overall sickness rate for BME employees (8.4 FTE days lost) was lower than the corporate average. No BME employee received a formal sickness interview perhaps reflecting their lower than average sickness rate.

## Internal Promotions

The Council does not operate a promotions scheme. All posts are filled through competitive recruitment. However, employees wishing to take different posts can apply for advertised vacancies across the Council. There is prior consideration for employees who are red-circled, under notice of redundancy or dismissal on health grounds. A breakdown of equality data on internal appointments is not yet available.

## Recruitment Monitoring

The recruitment monitoring figures are based on 8384 applications submitted (and 217 appointments) to the Council over the last year, across all directorates. They show the following recruitment trends:

	Percentage of all applicants	Percentage of applicants on shortlist	Percentage of applicants appointed
Female	56.6%	68.5%	56%
BME	2.2%	2.3%	1.8%
Disabled	3%	4%	1.8%
Age 16-21	15%	11.8%	10.3%
Age 22-30	33.3%	27.2%	27.9%
Age 31-40	19.5%	23.4%	22.7%
Age 41-50	18.3%	23.9%	20.7%
Age 51-60	9.4%	10.8%	10.3%
Age 61-65	0.6%	0.8%	2.6%
Age 65+	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%

The above indicates that, with the possible exception of 61-21 year olds, the corporate application rates do not differ significantly from the appointment rates.

During 2008/2009, recruitment work gradually transferred from directorate teams to a dedicated recruitment team. This has led to some disruption in the record keeping, which makes further analysis of the figures inappropriate.

### **Leavers**

BME employees accounted for 0.7% of all leavers from permanent posts during 2008/09.