

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

11TH DECEMBER 2023

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN & ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT – S.REES**

Matter for Information

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Gender Equality Action Plan Update

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members in relation to the Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme, which the Council signed up to in February 2019.

2. Background information

The Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme

Chwarae Teg is a charity established 25 years ago, that aims to “inspire, lead and deliver gender equality in Wales”. Over the last quarter of a century, Chwarae Teg have campaigned on a range of gender equality issues, carrying out extensive research, and also seeking to provide practical advice and support to women and to employers in Wales.

The Council joined the Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme in February 2019, a scheme that has supported organisations to develop gender equality action plans, based on analysis of available workforce data, consideration of employer practices, matched to evidenced based best practice recommendations, including actions to reduce gender pay gaps.

3. The Fair Play Employer Scheme Update and Action Plan

This report provides Members with an update in the relation to the actions that have been undertaken since September 2021 (when members previously received an update) in line with the Fair Play Employer Scheme Action Plan.

Unfortunately, members should note the very sad news that the Chwarae Teg organisation has had to close this Autumn 2023, due to financial challenges. The support of Chwarae Teg over the years has been invaluable to the council, providing expert advice as well as encouragement to proceed with our work around gender equality. As a result of this ongoing support, the Council is now confident to continue the journey started with Chwarae Teg, and continue to develop and deliver actions to improve gender equality. The Action Plan will now be known as the Gender Equality Action Plan.

4. Fair Play Employer Award

We were absolutely delighted that in the last ever Chwarae Teg Womenspire Awards ceremony, held in Cardiff in October just before the sad closure of Chwarae Teg, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council was awarded the 'Womenspire Fair Play Employer Award'. This award recognises our achievements towards gender equality within the workplace

5. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Gender Equality Action Plan (previously known as the Fair Play Employer Action Plan)

The Action Plan has 5 objectives, with a number of actions set out under each objective:

- To ensure the Council is a diverse and inclusive organisation;
- To promote, facilitate, analyse and monitor flexibility in the workplace at all levels (from top down) to enable women to progress and to ensure compatibility with a multi-generational workforce;

- To ensure a fair and transparent recruitment and selection process that encourages a wider talent pool and facilitates a more equal gender balance;
- To ensure the talent pipeline promotes female talent and progression and increases the number of women in senior roles; and
- Recognition and rewards to be managed transparently and kept fair regardless of gender or any other protected characteristic to ensure employees feel valued.

Following the implementation of the Future of Work Strategy: The Strategic Workforce Plan, endorsed by Members, many of the actions within the Action Plan have been incorporated and supported into the Delivery Plan of the Strategic Workforce Plan and the work will continue to be delivered.

Some of the key actions undertaken as part of the Action Plan are provided below:-

- An event was held on International Womens Day (8th March 2023) with a guest speaker from Chwarae Teg and Mrs Karen Jones, the Council's Chief Executive attended by employees across the Council; this event was very well received.
- Flexible working policies and options have been re-publicised in staff communication channels to ensure all our employees are aware of the opportunities available to them.
- The Menopause Action Plan and Menopause Pledge in place with high engagement levels from employees through communication channels and online and face to face sessions. This work won an Innovation Award at the NPT Employee Recognition Awards 2023.
- Employers for Carers Platform in place to support the wellbeing of carers in our workplaces; a Carers Policy has also been developed and implemented.
- The mentoring scheme 'NPT Ment2be' has successfully launched with 10 trained mentors supporting mentees from across the Council. There is a waiting list of mentees for the next round of the programme.

- The Equalities Training Programme has been reviewed and is awaiting sign off by CDG.
- Virtual Recognition and Awards Ceremony held in 2022 and 2023.
- Reduction in the Gender Pay Gap – the Gender Pay Gap has decreased to a median of 3.28% in 2023, compared to a median of 3.93% in 2019.

The positive work to support gender equality will continue over the next 12 months and a further report will be brought to Personnel Committee at the end of 2024.

The Action Plan is attached as Appendix One to this report.

5. Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

6. Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

7. Financial Appraisal

There are no financial implications to the Council in relation to this report. The work carried out in relation to the Gender Equality Action Plan is incorporated into the Future of Work Team which is part of the People and Organisational Development Division.

8. Recommendation

That Members note the Fair Play Employer Scheme Action Plan Update as set out in Appendix 1.

8. Officer contact

Sheenagh Rees, Head of Human & Organisational Development, Email: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk or tel. 01639 763315

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Gender Equality Action Plan