



Report of the Strategic HR & OD Manager

Equalities and Future Generations PDC – 21 July 2020

HR&OD - Update

Purpose:	To report on actions arising from the Equalities & Future Generations PDC.
Report Author:	Adrian Chard, Strategic HR&OD Manager
For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the Equalities & Future Generations PDC meeting of 26th November 2019, a request was made for further information on the following;
- Chwarae Teg Survey Results
 - Council Approach to Recruitment and Attraction

2. Chwarae Teg Survey Results

2.1 Context:

Chwarae Teg is a charity “working in Wales to support the economic development of women as well as working with businesses and organisations to develop and improve working”. They were commissioned to undertake an Employee Engagement Survey to assist the Council with understanding the current status of the organisational culture in response to Equality issues.

They undertook an organisation-wide survey to gain an understanding of how our Equality Strategy and policies are being implemented in practice. They focussed on four themes: unconscious bias, flexible working, HR policies and Recruitment and Selection practices and refer to this as the ‘Fair Play Employer Journey’.

2.2 Survey implementation and Findings

Chwarae Teg worked closely with HR&OD to gain a breadth and depth of understanding of what we are doing as a Council to address our obligations with regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, however, there is a particular emphasis for Chwarae Teg on gender inequality, and this is borne out by the questions that were included in the survey and the information provided in their final report.

2.3 Key information from the findings:

- There was a 9% return from the workforce a total of 942 participants, as follows:
 - o Responses: 37% male, 61% female, 2% prefer not to say (PNS)
 - o 67 responses from senior managers/HOS/Directors
 - o 108 responses from middle managers
 - o 126 responses from team leads
 - o 80% of employees were full time, 20% part time
 - o 65% of employees had over 10 years' length of service
- Most of the responses were from employees in Housing and PP, and Social Services
- Nearly 50% of respondents have caring responsibilities outside work

The Chwarae Teg report provides national data on how Wales is undertaking work to bring Gender Equality and in particular Gender Pay equality into alignment. However, as their report demonstrates, there is a way to go. Swansea Council's unique gender split makes comparisons with other Local Authorities difficult as we embrace the part time / flexible working ethic and have done for over 10 years. As a result we have 75% of the workforce are female, and 70% of the workforce work part time. Other Councils are closer to the 60/40% range.

Swansea Council's work on equality already being undertaken resulted in the Fair Play Silver Award from Chwarae Teg, and recognises *"a significant achievement and demonstrates the business commitment to making a difference to the recruitment, retention and progression of women working and contribution to broader efforts to close the gender pay gap and ensure the Welsh economy reaps the benefits of gender equality"*.

2.4 Recommendations

Chwarae Teg has stated that its aim is to support Swansea Council to 'embed inclusive working practices to support the recruitment, retention and progressions on working women', thus the plan is to focus on diversity in recruitment and selection; manage flexible working consistently, and overall focus on consistency.

As a result, and in line with the agreed arrangement with Chwarae Teg assistance has been offered to review our Recruitment and Selection approach. Due to COVID-19 that has been put on hold with the intention to take place in the Autumn in line with approach referred to in Section 3 below.

3. Recruitment Attraction Project

In 2019 a Project Group was established to consider ways of better attracting candidates into roles from across all communities in Swansea and to help support the Council's "Employee Value Proposition.

This group has identified been successful in identifying better use of social media to advertise and promote jobs and careers in the Council.

The group has also identified improvements to be made in the application process to support accessibility in applying for jobs. Due to COVID and other work priorities, progression has been delayed until the Autumn 2020 when work will re-commence with ICT to implement a new streamlined and simplified approach.

In addition links will be developed with representatives from the BAME and disabled communities to identify ways in which we can reach out and promote jobs and careers in the Council.

4. Support to BAME Workforce during COVID-19

In addition to the above, I believe it is it is worth referencing the work that has been undertaken to support workers in the Council during COVID-19 by;

- Directly contacting individual BAME workers, in confidence, offering them support.
- Working with Trade Unions, developing a specific risk assessment for BAME workers, recognising the impact that COVID-19 has had on that community. That assessment has been shared across all Welsh Local Authorities as an example of good practice.

Adrian Chard
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10th July 2020