

Report

Council



Part 1

Date: 11 September 2018

Subject **Strategic Equalities Plan - Annual Report 2017-18**

Purpose This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on the Strategic Equality Plan, which came into effect in 2016. The report also contains staff equalities data, which the authority is obliged to publish annually in accordance with statutory deadlines.

Author Head of People and Business Change

Ward All

Summary Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council is required to report annually on the progress it has made against the 9 Strategic Equality Objectives contained within the Strategic Equality Plan. The Equality Act also asks local authorities to publish staff equalities data, which this report also contains.

This report, previously received by Cabinet is the second annual report on the progress Newport City Council has made towards meeting the Equality Objectives set out in the authority's second four year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), as approved by Council 3rd March 2016.

Proposal **To approve the attached annual report and publish it on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.**

Action by Head of People and Business Change, Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

Corporate Directors
Cabinet Member for Assets, Equalities & Member Development (Deputy Leader)
The Council's Strategic Equalities Group
HR Manager

Background

This report is the second annual report on the progress Newport City Council has made towards meeting the Equality Objectives set out in the authority's second four year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), as approved by Council 3rd March 2016.

This report demonstrates both the positive progress Newport City Council has made over the past year towards meeting the 9 Equality Objectives laid out in the 2016 Strategic Equality Plan, but also highlights where we will need to improve in the coming year. As the lifetime of the strategy extends over four years, we would not expect to have delivered on all outcomes at this point in time, however the progress made to date is encouraging.

Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 (Wales) states that a listed body in Wales, listed bodies include Local Authorities, must produce an annual report by 31 March each year.

The Act sets out that the equality report must specifically outline progress towards fulfilling each of the authority's equality objectives, a statement on the effectiveness of the steps that the authority has taken to fulfil each of its equality objectives and specified employment information, including information on training and pay (unless it has already published this information elsewhere).

The report should also set out the steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information and how the authority has used this information in meeting the three aims of the general duty.

If relevant information has not been collected a statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information must also be included.

Governance and management

Following the approval of the SEP in 2016, the authority re-convened the member-led Strategic Equality Group (SEG), chaired by Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Assets, Equalities and Member Development. The group takes a strategic lead on the implementation of the equalities agenda. Through the SEG, progresses on the equality objectives are monitored throughout the year.

Financial Summary

The cost of implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and the Equality Objectives is met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area. The majority of the actions relate to work already identified in the Service Improvement Plans, for example workforce monitoring or occur in projects that have already been approved and prioritised, such as domestic abuse and hate crime.

	Year 1 (Current) £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £	Ongoing £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs (Income)					Not applicable
Net Costs (Savings)					
Net Impact on Budget					

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the Plan is not implemented	M	L	Priorities identified in the Plan are included in service area plans and partnership plans and monitored primarily through existing governance arrangements.	Heads of Service
That equality commitments are not understood by employees	M	L	Employees are aware of their responsibilities through the usual management structures. The Strategic Equalities Group provides a monitoring role against the SEP and this ensures that lead officers are aware of their roles in incorporating equality commitments across service delivery.	Head of People and Business Change
That Equality Objectives are implemented and reviewed	M	L	Progress against equalities objectives are reported on regularly to the Strategic Equality Group	Head of People and Business Change

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

As detailed in the body of the report, the council's commitments under the Equality Act and the Strategic Equality Plan are integrated into the authority's planning documents, which include the Strategic Equality Plan, the Wellbeing Plan, and the authority's most recent Corporate Plan.

Options Available

- a) To approve the attached report and publish on the council's website
- b) To not approve the attached report and redraft.

Preferred Option and Why

Option a) is the preferred option, in order to ensure that the council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications associated with the proposal to approve and then publish the SEP Annual Report on the Council's website. The cost of implementing the SEP is met from existing budgets in service areas. Fairness & Equality Impact Assessments are included in business cases during the Medium Term Financial Plan process when applicable.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the Council is required to publish an annual report setting out progress made and the effectiveness of the actions taken to meet its public sector equality duty and specific objectives. The annual report is also required to set out equalities data in relation to staffing information. The general public sector equality duty requires the Council to have due regard in the exercise of its functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct and to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. Regulations made by the Welsh Ministers impose specific duties on local authorities in Wales for the purpose of enabling better performance of these general duties. These include the duty to publish objectives designed to enable the authority to perform the statutory duty, to publish a statement setting out steps taken or intended steps in order to fulfil each objective and how long the authority will take in order to fulfil each objective. This report provides an update on the second year of delivery against the Strategic Equalities Plan 2016-2019 and confirms that good progress has been made in meeting the 9 equalities objectives set out in the Plan, but also identifying those areas where further work is required.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

This annual report reflects the positive progress made in implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan and meets the requirements to annually publish staff equalities data for the local authority. The work delivered over the last 12 months contributes to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives and the national well-being goals, particularly a more equal Wales. Any challenges identified in this report will be addressed through the Strategic Equalities Group.

Comments of Cabinet Member

This report provides a summary of the work that has been done in delivering the second year of the plan. The Strategic Equalities Group has played a key role that each objective is reviewed with progress updates from lead officers from across the authority. We will continue to progress this work over the next 12 months mainstreaming equalities across service delivery.

Local issues

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

No Fairness & Equalities Impact Assessment (F&EIA) is necessary for the annual report. The annual report feeds back on the strategic equality objectives outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan, the FEIA relating the equalities objectives can be found online.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

No consultation was needed for this report.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services. A programme of training for senior management and elected members is underway so that the wide-ranging implications of the act are understood and can be embedded in the Council's ways of working.

The Strategic Equalities Plan contributes to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives and the national well-being goals, particularly a more equal Wales.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20

Strategic Equalities Annual Report 16/17

Strategic Equalities Annual Report 17/18

Cabinet Report Strategic Equalities annual report Jul 2018

NCC Well-being Objectives and Well-being Statement

Wellbeing Plan

Dated: 1 Sep 2018