

# Scrutiny Report



## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

### Part 1

Date: March 2020

### Subject **Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024**

Author Overview and Scrutiny Officer

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

| Invitee:       | Area / Role / Subject                              |
|----------------|--|
| Tracy McKim    | <b>Policy, Partnership and Involvement Manager</b> |
| Heather Powell | <b>Connected Communities Manager</b>               |
|                |  |

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### 1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked

1. To consider the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and assess how effective it will be in furthering and promoting equality across Newport.
2. To consider the Objectives included in the Strategic Equality Plan and whether these are appropriately focussed

### 2 Context

#### Background

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The Act includes a public sector equality duty (the general duty), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality which came into force on the 5th April 2011. The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review.

2.2 The general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Sex
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership (in relation to employment only)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief

2.3 Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council is required to publish a Strategic Equality Plan every 4 years, including a number of strategic equality objectives. The plan sets out six equality objectives for Newport City Council (each with a number of related outcomes and key actions that will contribute to those outcomes). The plan is for the next four years beginning in April 2020 and finishing in March 2024. This is the third Strategic Equality Plan and it builds on progress already made, whilst taking a more outcome-focused approach to delivery of clearly defined objectives. The objectives relate to Leadership and Governance, Access and Engagement, Representative Workforce, Community Cohesion, Learning Well and Independent Living.

2.4 Objectives should be developed through consideration of a listed body's work and activities, including employment, service delivery and policy development. This analysis should be informed by engagement with people that share protected characteristics, gathering and analysing information, and assessing equality impact. Engagement is a key opportunity to gather information about which areas of work may be of interest to people with particular protected characteristics.

2.5 The equality objectives in Newport City Council's plan were created by looking at the broad themes that have already been identified across the council's existing strategic documents, such as the Well-Being and Corporate Plans. In addition to this, key external documents like the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 'Is Wales Fairer?: The State of Human Rights and Equality' (2018) report, which provides a broad assessment of inequality in Wales were also considered. The objectives were also mapped against Welsh Government's strategic equality work, considering documents like their Nation of Sanctuary Plan, Hate Crime Framework for Action, and Action on Disability framework.

2.6 The equality objectives were also subject to a 6 week consultation period, providing opportunity for the public to consider our areas of proposed focus. Engagement was undertaken with people that share protected characteristics through focus groups with: Newport Access Group, Newport People First, Newport BAME Forum, Newport Youth Council and LGBTQ+ young people. A Consultation Report will be published alongside the Strategic Equality Plan, providing further detail on the methods and outcomes of engagement, links to wider council priorities, and how local and national evidence has informed the development of the objectives. An operational delivery plan will underpin the Strategic Equality Plan, setting out in detail the steps that will be taken to achieve the objectives. The delivery plan will be routinely reported on through the council's Strategic Equality Group (SEG), chaired by the Cabinet Member for Equalities and will also be the subject of the Strategic Equalities Annual Report.

### **3 Information Submitted to the Committee**

3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

### **4. Suggested Areas of Focus**

## Role of the Committee

### The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Assess whether the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 is easily understood and enables the Council to fulfil its Equality Duties
- Identify any barriers to effective implementation of the objectives
- Determine if the Committee would like to make a recommendation(s) to Cabinet on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

## Section B – Supporting Information

### 5 Supporting Information

5.1 Include here background research that may help the Committee such as:

- CfPS guidance – check the [publications](#) or the [blog](#) list for relevant work
- Any relevant information from the [Data Unit](#)
- WG Guidance
- Equalities Act

5.2 These can be summarised and included within the body of the report, or linked for background reading.

### 6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 aligns with all Council priorities – in particular the Corporate Plan and wellbeing objectives:

|                                   |  |   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Well-being Objectives</b>      | Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment | Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities | Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient | Build cohesive & sustainable communities |
| <b>Corporate Plan Commitments</b> | Thriving City  | Aspirational People   |  | Resilient Communities                    |
| <b>Supporting Function</b>        | Modernised Council   |   |  |  |

### 7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

| 5 Ways of Working   | Types of Questions to consider:  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Long-term</b></p> <p>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</p>  | <p>How will the implementation of Plan enable the Council to deliver its Wellbeing Objectives?<br/>How will the Plan enable future Cabinets to set its Strategic Objectives and deliver longer term equality priorities for Newport?</p>   |
| <p><b>Prevention</b></p> <p>Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.</p>  | <p>How are Officers and Cabinet Members monitoring performance of outcomes ensuring pro-active action where there is under performing?</p> <p>How do you ensure Officers take responsibility and account for under performance?</p> <p>Are Officers and Members provided with timely and accurate reports of progress?</p> <p>How does the Council intend to demonstrate the outcome(s) of delivering against its objectives and how this benefits citizens, businesses and other stakeholders of Newport?</p> |
| <p><b>Integration</b></p> <p>Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</p>      | <p>Is the plan integrated with other public bodies' wellbeing objectives?</p> <p>Does the plan consider the partnership working with other public bodies and its partners to deliver its objectives?</p>   |
| <p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <p>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).</p>   | <p>Has the Council considered the policies and procedures of other public, private and third sector organisations as part of this Plan's development?</p> <p>How have you collaborated with Finance, Human Resources in the development of this new Plan?</p>  |
| <p><b>Involvement</b></p> <p>The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</p> | <p>How will you ensure Officers across the Council embed the objectives set out in the Plan?</p> <p>Have you involved other key stakeholders outside of Scrutiny and Cabinet in the development of the Plan?</p> <p>How will you ensure the Plan is embedded into working practice?</p> <p>How as a Council are we ensuring we are consistently seeking the views of those who are impacted through the implementation of the Plan?</p>  |

## 8. Background Papers

Include all additional documents that are referenced in the report, and those that you have used as background reading. Hyperlink to online versions of them if available.

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)

- Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23.
- 'Is Wales Fairer?' – The state of equality and human rights 2018
- Nation of Sanctuary Plan.
- Hate Crime Framework for Action.
- Action on Disability framework.

Report Completed: February 2020