

Scrutiny Report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: October 2020

Subject **Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) Annual Report 2019/20**

Author Overview and Scrutiny Officer

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

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Rhys Cornwall	Head of People & Business Change
Heather Powell	Connected Communities Manager
Rachael Davies	HR and OD Manager
David Mayer	Cabinet Member Community and Resources

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. The Council's progress towards achieving the objectives that were defined in the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016 – 2020.
2. Whether the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2019/20 contains sufficient information to monitor the achievement of the 9 Objectives.
3. Whether it wishes to provide comment and recommendations on the SEP annual report to Cabinet.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The Annual Report on the Strategic Equality Plan demonstrates the progress made against Equality Objectives identified in 2016. Launching in April 2016 the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016-2020, includes nine key equality objectives which are measured and reported on annually. Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to set a number of Equality Objectives every 4 years which assist them in their duty to pay due regard to the need to promote equality of

opportunity, foster positive relationships between community groups and eliminate discrimination. The council's nine objectives are:

- **Objective 1: Workplace Diversity** - The Council's workforce will be representative of the population we service and the workforce are involved in decisions that affect them.
- **Objective 2: Engagement** - We will involve people in the development of Council services that affect them and base Council decisions on what people need.
- **Objective 3: Improving access** - People can access all the Council services and activities that they need in terms of physical access and communication access etc.
- **Objective 4: Tackling Poverty** - We will work to reduce poverty, especially persistent poverty amongst some of our poorest people and communities, and reducing the likelihood that people will become poor.
- **Objective 5: Cohesive Communities** - People have a sense of belonging to the city and feel safe.
- **Objective 6: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence** - People who are subject or witness to domestic abuse are supported by the Council and its partners in their current situation and through any changes they wish to make.
- **Objective 7: Homelessness** - To provide a safe, supporting, empowering and non-judgemental environment for homeless and marginalised people so that they can achieve their potential.
- **Objective 8: Welsh Language** - We will promote our bilingual public services and increase the use of Welsh in Newport.
- **Objective 9: Corporate compliance** - Strategic leadership, governance arrangements, ensuring standards are high and consistent across all the Council and its areas.

2.2 Local authorities are required as part of the Welsh specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 to produce and publish the Annual Report, within 12 months of the end of each financial year. The report highlights the challenges, changes and progress made throughout the year and measures these against actions set out in the Strategic Equality Plan. The Annual Report also includes workforce data which is a publishing requirement under the Welsh specific duties.

2.3 This is the final report for the current Strategic Equality Plan. The new Strategic Equality Plan was agreed by Council in October and sets our objectives for the next four years.

2.4 The Council's new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 sets out six equality objectives, each with a number of related outcomes and key actions that will contribute to those outcomes. The objectives relate to Leadership and Governance, Access and Engagement, Representative Workforce, Community Cohesion, Learning Well and Independent Living.

2.4 The Strategic Equalities Group (SEG) monitors progress made against the Strategic Equality Objectives throughout the year and is chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Equalities. In the year being considered, membership currently consists of representation from the Fairness Commission, Trade Unions, Elected Members Heads of Service and lead officers. This has ensured a breadth of skills, expertise and inputs to inform the current strategy.

2.5 The SEP Annual Report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for a **strategic overview** to work alongside the performance monitoring completed by other Committees.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2019/20

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

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

Question the progress towards achieving the nine Equality Objectives set out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020:

- Look back at how well the Council has performed in 2019/20 against its Equality Objectives in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020;
- To assess whether the actions taken to achieving the nine Equality Objectives are being undertaken, to what extent and where the evidence for this is;
- Assess and make comment on:
 - How effectively the Council is performing against the Objectives/Actions;
 - The extent to which any underperformance is being addressed and associated risks are being mitigated;
- Conclusions:
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the report?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the performance against the SEP?
 - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
 - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations to the Cabinet?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- The report is linked with each of the Council policies and priorities:

Well-being Objectives	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
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

6 Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
<p>Long-term</p> <p>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</p>	How are you prioritising the actions with the plan against the short term and long term needs of the Community?
	How is the Council considering the long term impacts of COVID-19 on actions and on the long term needs of the community?
	Are there any long term trends developing that could affect how this plan is implemented to how the actions are prioritised?
<p>Prevention</p> <p>Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.</p>	How are you ensuring that the needs of communities and service users are monitored and are taken into account within the implementation of the Plan?
	How is the Council considering preventative actions to support its communities ?
<p>Integration</p> <p>Considering how public bodies' well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	How does the Council's implementation of the plan impact upon the services of other public bodies and their objectives?
	How is the Council ensuring the Objectives in the plan are being aligned to the well-being goals/Corporate Plan Objectives?
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).</p>	How is the knowledge / information / good practice of others being used to inform / influence the Council's work?
	How is the Council learning from the experience and knowledge gained from other organisations and service areas?
<p>Involvement</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>	How as a Council are we ensuring we are consistently seeking the views of those who are impacted through the implementation of the plan?
	How are you ensuring the views of the City's diverse communities are considered?

7. Background Papers

- [The Essentials – Well-being of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan annual report 2018-2019](#)[Strategic Equality Plan \(2016 – 2020\)](#)

Report Completed: October 2020