

Scrutiny Report



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: February 2024

Subject Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028

Author Scrutiny Officer

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

| Invitee: | Area / Role / Subject |
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| Rhys Cornwall | Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate |
| Tracy McKim | Head of People, Policy and Transformation |
| Janice Dent | Policy and Partnership Manager |
| Donald Mutale | Senior Equalities Officer |
| Cllr Dimitri Batrouni | Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation |

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked:

1. To consider the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 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 unified and replaced previous laws that prevented discrimination with one single Act. The Act identifies a public sector equality duty which took over the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality from the 5th April 2011 onwards. The general duty's goal is to make sure that public authorities and those who carry out a public function think about how they can contribute to a more just society by promoting equality and good relations in their everyday activities. The duty makes sure that policies and services are designed and delivered with equality considerations in mind and that they are reviewed regularly. Moreover, the Equality Act

requires the Council to publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) every 4 years, with several strategic equality objectives.

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

Summary

2.3 This iteration of the SEP builds on work done in previous Plans, highlighting how it will meet the 3 aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and our own priorities to advance equality. This Plan details how the Strategy will be monitored.

2.4 The report gives details the Council's equality duties regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty, who is protected under the Equality Act 2010, Wales specific duties, socio-economic duties and other related duties and key duties.

2.5 The report also details Newport's position and the Corporate Plan aims and objectives which this Plan will support.

2.6 This Plan has been out to consultation and responses can be seen in the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28: Consultation Report.

2.7 The Plan details six equality objectives and breaks down outcomes and which protected characteristics they would most benefit:

- Leadership, Governance and Involvement
- Customer Service, Digital Inclusion and Access
- Representative Workforce
- Community Cohesion
- Equity in Education
- Equitable Service Delivery

Previous Consideration of this Item

2.8 The previous iteration of the Plan was received by Committee in March 2020.

2.9 Annual performance monitoring under this report has been received by Committee between 2020-2024.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

3.2 Attached at Appendix 2 is the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028: Consultation Report. (To be added)

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

4.1 Role of the Committee

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

- Assess whether the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 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 2024-2028.

4.2 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

| 5 Ways of Working | Types of Questions to consider: |
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| <p>Long-term 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? How will the Plan enable future Cabinets to set its Strategic Objectives and deliver longer term equality priorities for Newport?</p> |
| <p>Prevention 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>Integration 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>Collaboration 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>Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and</p> | <p>How will you ensure Officers across the Council embed the objectives set out in the Plan?</p> |

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| ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves. | <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> |
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Section B – Supporting Information

5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

| Well-being Objective | 1 – Economy, Education and Skills | 2 – Newport’s Environment and Infrastructure | 3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care | 4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council |
|----------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Aims: | Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all. | A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future. | Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do. | Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core. |

5.1 The Plan has strong links across all Objectives and all areas of the Council.

6 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022-23](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-22](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-21](#)
- [‘Is Wales Fairer?’ – The state of equality and human rights 2018](#)
- [Nation of Sanctuary Plan.](#)

Report Completed: February 2024