

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th October 2024
Report Subject	Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Report Author	Corporate Manager – Capital Programme and Assets
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council published its equality objectives and four-year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in April 2020, fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of equality objectives is to address the most significant issues and areas of inequality that face people with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on public sector organisations in Wales. These include the requirement to publish an annual report by 31st March each year, which must outline progress on meeting the PSED and achieving the equality objectives. The attached annual report highlights the progress the Council has made in implementing its SEP and meeting its equality objectives during 2023/2024.

This is the final annual report for the SEP 2020-24. A new SEP for the period 2024-28 is now in place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1. | Cabinet endorse the content of the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24 and subsequent publication on the Council's website. |
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24
1.01	<p>The Council published its equality objectives and four-year Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in April 2020, fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (“The Act”).</p> <p>The purpose of equality objectives is to address the most significant issues and areas of inequality that face people with protected characteristics. For example, disabled people, women, older people.</p>
1.02	<p>The Act requires that an annual report is produced which specifically outlines progress towards fulfilling each of the Council’s equality objectives and includes specified employment information, including information on training and pay (unless this has already been published). The report must be published by 31st March each year.</p>
1.03	<p>The Council’s Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report for 2023/24 is provided at Appendix 1.</p> <p>This is the final annual report for the SEP 2020-24 and highlights the Council’s progress in meeting its equality objectives during 2023/2024.</p> <p>This report does not include the full data required for employment and pay statutory reporting. These reports are published separately and are the responsibility of HR.</p> <p>This is the final report for the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. A new Plan for the period 2024-28 is now in place.</p>
1.04	<p>Areas of achievement in meeting the equality duties during 2023/24 are summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students from our secondary schools decided to work with the Youth Service to organise their own Pride event to raise awareness of issues facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people and to celebrate being different. Approximately 250 students attended this event.• Several employees in Streetscene have volunteered to become Mental Health Champions, providing support to their colleagues and developing initiatives to promote awareness of mental health issues. The Champions meet quarterly where any emerging trends and concerns are discussed. Their work helps address the unequal mental health outcomes experienced by men, as reported by Mental Health UK.• Social Services formed a partnership with HfT and Deeside Business Forum to support individuals with mental health issues,

	neurodiversity and learning disabilities, to secure paid employment in their local community.
1.05	<p>Whilst the Council can demonstrate progress in achieving its equality objectives there are still areas for improvement, a summary of those areas is provided below.</p> <p>The collection and publication of equality data: Equality data provides a profile of Council customers and employees. This information is important in making sure services are accessible to everyone who needs them and monitoring progress in meeting the equality objectives. Collecting equality data has also been identified as an area of improvement in the Corporate Self-assessment and is a requirement of the PSED.</p> <p>Impact assessments: A new approach on Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA) has been developed with the University of Manchester which will need to be embedded across the organisation to improve the quality of IIAs and ensure they are undertaken consistently.</p>
1.06	<p>To address the above, two subgroups of the Corporate Equality Board have been established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Data Group to develop and improve employee and customer data collection and analysis across the Council. • An IIA Quality Assurance Group to ensure the quality of Equality and socio-economic Impact Assessments (EIAs)/IIAs to support service improvement and ensure they meet statutory guidance and regulations. <p>The outcomes of the work of these Groups will be included in the annual reports for the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p>
1.07	<p>Further Information</p> <p>The production and publication of the annual Workforce Information Report and the Equal Pay Audit reports contribute to the Council's SEP Annual Report. This is because they form part of the reporting requirements of the PSED and will need to be published before, or simultaneously to, the SEP Annual Report 2023/24.</p> <p>The Workforce Information Report and Equal pay Audit are produced by HR and have yet to be published.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no resource implications associated with this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT																												
3.01	<p>Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)</p> <p>An integrated impact assessment is not required as this is a report on progress in meeting the Council's equality objectives, which aim to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics. A full impact assessment was completed on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.</p> <p>Under the five ways of working principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, this report will have the following impact:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ways of Working</th> <th>Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive impact through promoting equal access to services and information</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Well-being Goal</th> <th>Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Prosperous Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resilient Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthier Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through reducing health inequalities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More equal Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through increasing access to services and information for people with protected characteristics</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cohesive Wales</td> <td>Positive impact through addressing hate crime and fostering good relations between people from different protected groups</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vibrant Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Globally responsible Wales</td> <td>No change</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ways of Working	Impact	Long-term	No change	Prevention	Positive impact through promoting equal access to services and information	Integration	No change	Collaboration	No change	Involvement	No change	Well-being Goal	Impact	Prosperous Wales	No change	Resilient Wales	No change	Healthier Wales	Positive impact through reducing health inequalities	More equal Wales	Positive impact through increasing access to services and information for people with protected characteristics	Cohesive Wales	Positive impact through addressing hate crime and fostering good relations between people from different protected groups	Vibrant Wales	No change	Globally responsible Wales	No change
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Relevant officers, including the Corporate Equalities Board, were consulted to produce the Annual Report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: Cymraeg 01267 224923 English 01352 702122 E-mail: fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Data collection: is the collection and analysis of information on the profile of customers and employees. For example, people’s age range, disability, gender reassignment, ethnic group, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation to identify actual or potential inequalities.</p> <p>Equal Pay Audit: an equal pay audit compares the pay of men and women and employees with other protected characteristics who are doing equal work. The aim is to identify any differences in pay, investigate the causes of any differences and take action to eliminate unequal pay that cannot be justified.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: these are the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.</p> <p>PSED: Public Sector Equality Duty, which places a General Duty and Specific Duty on public bodies. The General Duty requires public bodies to show due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and foster good relations. The Specific Duty in Wales requires public bodies to develop equality objectives and publish Strategic Equality Plans. It also includes the requirement to train employees, assess impact of decisions and undertake equality monitoring.</p> <p>Workforce Information Report: as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council is required to collect and publish a range of information on the diversity profile of its workforce and key HR processes. This includes reports broken down by protected characteristic on recruitment and selection, those who leave the authority and employees who are subject to disciplinary and grievance procedures. The purpose is to analyse the data</p>

	to identify areas where there may be potential or actual discrimination and to take action to address this.
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