

Report of the Cabinet Member for Transformation & Performance

Council – 28 April 2016

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2016 – 2020

Purpose:	To present the Strategic Equality Plan
Policy Framework:	Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 20120
Reason for Decision:	To present the Strategic Equality Plan for approval.
Consultation:	Legal, Finance, Access to Services
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that the Strategic Equality Plan be approved.
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Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Catherine Window

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides detail on our refreshed Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) for 2016 – 2020 following consultation and engagement.

2.0 Strategic Equality Plan 2016 - 2020

2.1 Our current SEP comes to an end in March 2016. Under the regulations, we are obliged to publish a refreshed Plan (including Equality Objectives) every 4 years. This draft has been developed to incorporate the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme action plan.

2.2 A Task & Finish Group has been used to develop the Equality Objectives, with advice, information and support provided by key officers.

2.3 The consultation and engagement work undertaken on the SEP was extensive and resulted in close to 200 individual comments / points of feedback. The resulting Equality Objectives are:

1. Ensure equality of access to services

2. Undertake a range of work focused on safety including hate crime, modern slavery, protection of vulnerable people, radicalisation and extremism etc.
3. Develop a whole Council approach to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to meet our commitments contained within the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme
4. Continue to improve Social Services provision within both Adult and Child & Family Services, ensuring that the service user's needs are at the centre of all planning and commissioning activities
5. Improve pupil attainment and continue to close performance gaps
6. Provide equality support for schools
7. Provide opportunities via apprenticeships and work placements
8. Improve access to the infrastructure around pavements, roads and parking provision for disabled and older people, as well as families with young children
9. Improve access to public transport by bus for disabled and older people, as well as families with young children
10. Ensure we tackle and alleviate the effects of poverty
11. Ensure consultation and engagement is inclusive and undertake awareness raising activities
12. Work on health and sport initiatives that focus on outcomes for our communities
13. Continue to improve staff and Member awareness of equality and diversity issues
14. Comply with the Procurement and Assessment of Impact regulations set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

2.4 These objectives have been designed to cover both whole-authority opportunities and specific services or themes, which are of particular importance to protected groups. We have utilised a number of sources in their development, including:

- Outcomes of engagement activities with equality groups
- National and local evidence
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Corporate priorities
- Existing strategies and plans
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Children and Young People's Rights Scheme

2.5 Engagement activities included stakeholder events and meetings, drop-in sessions, an on-line survey and specific workshops with individual groups. There have been changes to the initial draft Equality Objectives as a result, and services have also provided responses on the comments received in order to populate a consultation feedback report for publication in April.

2.6 Work has also been undertaken to link the Equality Objectives to our Corporate Priorities and Corporate Values, following internal feedback on the draft plan. While we have fewer objectives in this plan than our first, this is due to our learning over the first four years of the Public Sector

Equality Duty in Wales (and a more holistic approach internally), and not a reduction in our work or commitment to equality and children's rights.

3.0 Financial Implications

3.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, acceptance of the SEP could result in additional expenditure at a future time. Acceptance of the SEP does not mean that additional resources will be made available and it should be assumed that future spending needs will need to be contained within existing budget provision.

3.2 Within the development of the Equality Objectives, the support and guidance of the Access to Services Team has focused heavily on the financial aspect. All service areas have been advised to only set Objectives that are achievable as additional funds are not available corporately.

4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 This work is governed by the Equality Act 2010, (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which places specific duties on public authorities. The 16 regulations include specific publication requirements for:

- A Strategic Equality Plan (and any revisions)
- Equality Objectives including timescales and actions to be taken
- An annual equality report
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Any relevant equality information
- Specified employment information, including information on training and pay.

5.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

5.1 The current SEP was subject to a full EIA at the time of development and identified no adverse issues. This has been updated in order to reflect the 2016 – 2020 content.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2020