



To:
Councillor Louise Gibbard
Cabinet Member for Better Communities

CC: Cllr Alyson Pugh

BY EMAIL

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Date
Dyddiad:

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Summary: This is a letter from Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel to the Cabinet Member for Better Communities following the meeting of the Panel on 28 January to look at impact and progress with the recommendations arising from the Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry.

Dear Cllr Gibbard,

Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – 28 January 2021

We would like to thank you, Lee Wenham the Head of Communications and Marketing and Rhian Millar the Consultation Co-ordinator, for attending our meeting. We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and to share the views of the Panel.

You updated us on the current position and progress made with regard to the recommendations contained in the Equalities Scrutiny report including that:

- A new Strategic Equality Plan for 2020/24 was developed and published in April 2020. The plan was developed in line with Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance and that it incorporates the key recommendations from the Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry.
- A new Strategic Equality and Future Generation Board has been established in Swansea. The Board will have a key responsibility for the actions and recommendations within the Strategic Equality Plan and Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry. The Board will also have responsibility for the Future Generations (especially the seven areas of change identified by the Act). You told us that this a key change in the structure to the delivery of Equalities and Future Generations across the

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Council. A post to support the Board has also been approved and an appointment will be made in the coming months.

- Covid has opened up avenues of new opportunity including the increased use of virtual contact, engaging and consulting the public. Many lessons have been learnt from these new ways of working.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant challenges to the Council. During the past 10 months officers have had to shift focus to ensure that Council services were maintained and those most vulnerable were supported during the crisis. This switch in focus has resulted in some areas of work being put on hold or suspended which has affected how some of the actions have been progressed to date.
- As a result there are a number of recommendations that have not been completed and some that will be ongoing.

The Panel agreed that there has been positive progress with the recommendations especially with the creation of the new Equality and Future Generations Board and associated support. This and the other work done so far should provide a good foundation for moving forward and in driving improvements in the medium and longer term. The Panel agreed to meet again in November 2021 to look in more detail at the progress made and impact of the inquiry.

Your Response

We look forward to hearing more about progress in November and would welcome any updates you may have by email along the way. We hope you find this letter useful and informative and welcome your comments on any of the issues raised but do not on this occasion require a formal written response.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR LYNDON JONES

Convener, Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

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