



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Human Rights & Equalities

Cabinet – 18 January 2024

### Annual Equality Review 2022/23

<b>Purpose:</b>	To publish the Council's Annual Equality Review for 2022/23 in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty and reporting regulations for Wales.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Public Sector Equality Duty and reporting regulations for Wales.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) Cabinet approve the report content for publication.
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#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The attached report is the tenth review under the Public Sector Equality Duty and reflects the annual reporting regulations for Wales introduced in 2011.

#### 2. Content

2.1 The report at Appendix A summarises progress against the Strategic Equality Objectives contained within our Strategic Equality Plan 2020/24. Additional information (of relevance to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty) has also been included.

2.2 The report is a retrospective review of progress against the actions to meet the Objectives during 2022/23. Details on employment & training information is attached at Appendix B.

### 3. Summary

3.1 Overall this year we have continued to make good progress in the delivering of our strategic equality objectives and our Strategic Equality Plan. Our Strategic Equalities and Future Generations Board have continued to provide strategic direction and oversee the implementation of our plan. Here is a summary of some of our successes and their impact and some of the challenges that we need to address in the year ahead.

3.1.2 Out of the 65 steps contained within the SEP 2020-24, good progress has been made with implementing the majority of the steps (85%) during 2022-23. In terms of progress during 2022-23:

- 3% (n=2) of the steps have been completed,
- 82% (n=54) of the steps are ongoing - good progress has been made,
- 11% (n= 7) of the steps - limited progress has been made,
- 3% (n=2) of the steps – significant delay to delivery.

3.1.3 Out of those steps where limited progress has been made, progress has to some extent been determined by wider societal and economic factors outside the direct control of the Council for example. For example, the increase in the number of young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) and the number of people preventing themselves as homeless and applications for social housing are reflective of national trends and not indicative of the quality of local services. Similarly, other steps where progress has been limited such as - supporting improvements to access public transport by bus for disabled people - have also been constrained by factors outside the direct control of the Council and a lack of national investment in public transport.

3.1.4 There are however 3 steps where limited progress has been made and where is potential for further gains. These steps relate to collecting better data on our workforce in relation to protected characteristics, ensuring full coverage of our equality forums such as establishing a Women's and Inter-Faith Consultative Forum and the development of more easy read and plain English/Welsh resources. Although work has started in these areas, the pace of delivery and gaps in provision remain areas for future improvement.

3.1.5 Successes – and what this meant.

- We have revised our IIA's to help assess all our decision making and policy development. This has strengthened our approach to applying an equality lens to all our core business and decision making.
- There is closer alignment between many of the steps to deliver both the Council's Equality and Well-being Objectives. This Improves integration

between the Council's key priorities and plans in order to improve well-being and strive towards a more equal Swansea.

- Established a Strategic Equalities and Future Generations Board (SEFGB) in September 2021. This now oversees and co-ordinates the Council's obligations under the Equality Act and Duty and provides a corporate focus on equality related issues.
- We supported several Council wide celebrations such as LGBT+ history month and Women's History Month, developed a City of Sanctuary Film and continued to work with the Friends of the Glynn Vivian Art gallery and volunteers. These campaigns celebrated Swansea's diversity and zero tolerance of discrimination and positively promoted and was part of a campaign to welcome refugees.
- Work continued on the Fusion programme. This supported people to access cultural activity for well-being and acquire new skills in activities such as film making, creative writing, music making, dance, crafts, animation, heritage, volunteering, exhibitions and visual art.
- A revised Consultation and Engagement strategy was adopted by Council. This year, people have had the opportunity to give their views on a wide range of issues including the Council's Budget, the Council's Corporate Plan, Human Rights priorities, and the Southwest Wales Corporate Joint Committee's Corporate Plan.
- The Council adopted a Public Participation in Democracy strategy. This year our Democratic Services Team worked with our Partnership and Involvement Team to raise awareness with young people about the new voting entitlement for young people aged 16 years living in Wales.
- The Council procured external support from CoPro Lab to build on co-productive approaches employed throughout the pandemic and to develop further internal capacity and capability. This will help to embed a culture of coproduction across the organisation and sit alongside practical resources, such as good practice examples.
- Council adopted the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia. The purpose is to provide a framework to understand and identify prejudices, including unconscious bias, and to build trust within our communities by demonstrating that the Council is committed to tackling Islamophobia.
- Swansea declared Human Rights City status. The ultimate vision is to incorporate human rights into policy, practice and local life, raising awareness of the good stories as well as highlighting areas that need improving.
- The Council continued to work in partnership with the Health Board and partners to raise awareness around Violence against Women, Domestic

Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). This shared responsibility enabled us to meet our objectives ensuring effective, timely interventions and support. Crisis intervention remained a priority, receiving 2,056 referrals from April 22 to March 23, offering support, safeguarding and Court assistance to those subject to the Criminal and Civil justice system.

- National educational results at key stage 4 have not been calculated by the Welsh Government but will resume in 2023. Grade distributions per subject are available for 2022. Local analysis of Swansea results shows good performance overall that compare favourably.
- Employment programmes continued to support people in work. 3295 citizens have accessed employment support via a single access point and signposted to appropriate support. 391 participants were supported into employment. Over 30 sector specific/employer/information and advice recruitment days were delivered by the Council during the last year with over 800 vacancies sourced. We supported the delivery of the first multi placement, multi discipline scheme with the Swansea Bay Health board was developed with 50 placements available.
- Work on the development of prevention and early help through family support interventions progressed well. During 2022-23 the Families First programme had 11,609 beneficiaries.
- The Council has reviewed and developed its Equalities training module and developed a new Recruitment and Selection module. The purpose is to ensure that recruiting managers consider all equality considerations during the recruitment process.
- A 2023 data snapshot shows a significant improvement in recruitment data as applicants are disclosing their protected characteristics in high numbers. Of 7960 applicants during the year only 133 applicants declined to share their sensitive data.

#### 3.1.6 Challenges and work underway in the next 12 months.

- We continued working to improve the equalities data we hold about our workforce and to encourage staff to disclose their personal data relating to their protected characteristics. This had limited impact as the 2023 data suggests that there has only been a 1% increase in the disclosure rate from the existing workforce and further consideration will need to be given on how to improve this data collation exercise.
- We recognise that there are some gaps in relation to specific forums and networks e.g. establishing a Women's forum (a specific recommendation from the Scrutiny inquiry into equalities). In addition, we also recognise that there are some issues related to the sustainability of networks and forums and the role of the Council in supporting these. We are currently reviewing our support in line with resources and as we revise our

structure and processes to implement our Consultation and Engagement strategy with the Council's Leadership Team.

- Some gaps at key stage 4 based on 2022 educational analysis were seen for boys compared to girls, Looked After Children (LAC) compared to non-LAC and Free School Meals (FSM) compared to non-FSM. Black and Minority Ethnic pupils had point scores which were generally higher than White British pupils. These gaps were also typical of the pre-pandemic situation.
- Work is currently underway in relation to the Council adopting a definition of Antisemitism. Work is also underway in relation to exploring the Social Model of Disability and whether the Council can adopt the principles within the model and incorporate these within our policies, procedures and processes. We are also looking to pursue Disability Confident Leader status in the Disability Confident employer scheme.
- Work continues mapping what our services are currently doing in relation to specific actions within the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales.
- We are planning to launch a publicity and communications plan in 2023-24 which aims to further encourage Equality training completion, prioritising managers within the Council.

#### **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic,

social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.1.3 This report meets our duty to report on progress in 2022/23 meeting the Strategic Equality Objectives set out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020/24; so there is no direct impact on people or communities.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A	Equality Review Report 2022/23
Appendix B	Equalities Data Report – Year end 31 March 2023
Appendix C	Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form