

Scrutiny Report



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: Augusts 2023

Subject Strategic Equalities Plan Annual Report 2023-24

Author Scrutiny Advisor

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

| Invitee: | Area / Role / Subject |
|------------------|--|
| Rhys Cornwall | Strategic Director for Corporate and Transformation |
| Tracy McKim | Head of People, Policy & Transformation |
| Janice Dent | Policy and Partnership Manager |
| Donald Mutale | Senior Equalities Officer |
| Cllr Pat Drewett | Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction |

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked

1. Whether the Annual Report reflects a true and fair account of the council's progress towards achieving the objectives defined in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 for the period in question – 2023 – 2024.
2. Whether the Annual Report highlights the ongoing commitment to Equalities effectively and focuses on appropriate successes and highlights successes and good work
3. Whether the Annual Report highlights the ongoing commitment to equalities effectively and focuses on appropriate areas for development
4. Whether it wishes to provide comment and recommendations on the Annual Report to Cabinet

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 This is the final performance report under the Council's [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#) (SEP)
- 2.2 The Annual Report on the SEP demonstrates the progress made against the Equality Objectives identified in the SEP.
- 2.2 The SEP sets out six Strategic Equality Objectives to support the council's duty to pay due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, foster positive relationships between community groups, and eliminate discrimination, as contained within the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.3 The six Strategic Equality Objectives are:
1. Leadership, Governance, and Involvement - Newport City Council has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust monitoring processes and regular meaningful stakeholder engagement
 2. Customer Service and Access - Newport City Council's services are accessible to everyone in Newport, providing services that are both inclusive and considerate of individual need
 3. Representative Workforce - Newport City Council has a workforce that represents the city and is a workplace with an inclusive culture which recruits, develops and retains staff
 4. Community Cohesion - Newport City Council promotes positive relationships between different communities, supporting integration and effectively identifying emerging community tensions
 5. Learn Well - Newport City Council supports the well-being and attainment of the city's pupils, and actively looks to address any disparity in achievement of vulnerable learners
 6. Independent Living - Newport City Council contributes to the city being a great place to live, to grow older and live independently, and has in place a range of services that accommodates people in different situations
- 2.4 As part of our duties under the Equality Act (2010), Newport City Council is required to produce and publish an Annual Report outlining the progress that we have made against our Strategic Equality Objectives which are set out in our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-24. This Annual Report sets out a summary of key achievements against our identified Objectives and outcomes, a detailed update on work to meet each Objective and finally, our workforce equality data which is also a publishing requirement under the Equality Act (2010)
- 2.5 The statutory deadline for publishing the annual report is the end of the financial year, on the council's website, with relevant notification and advertising of publication via relevant channels, including our website.
- 2.6 This report relates to the final year of delivery of the 2020-2024 SEP. During the year, progress against our Strategic Equality Objectives is monitored and supported by the council's Strategic Equalities Group (SEG). For the period of this report, this group was chaired by the Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation (now the Leader of the Council), and membership includes representation from Newport's Fairness Commission, Trade Unions, Elected Member Equality Champions, Staff Support Networks Chairs, and service area lead officers. This group is now Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction.
- 2.7 The SEP Annual Report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for a **strategic overview** to work alongside the performance monitoring completed by other Committees.
- 2.8 The Committee considered the new [Strategic Equalities Plan 2024-28 in March 2023](#). It was considered by [Cabinet in April 2023](#) and agreed by [Council in April 2023](#).

Previous Consideration of this item

2.9 The Committee previously considered this item during the [9th October 2023 meeting](#).

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023/24.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

4.1

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

- Consider and make comment on the content of the Annual Report and key achievements as outlined
- Determine whether the content of the report is a true reflection of the Council’s Strategic Equalities performance in 2023-2024
- Conclusions:
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the report?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the quality of the Annual Report?
 - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
 - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations to the Cabinet?

4.2 **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**

| 5 Ways of Working | Types of Questions to consider: |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Long-term</p> <p>The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</p> | What consideration have you given to the long term trends that could affect your proposal or; how could your proposal impact these trends? |
| | How will the needs of your service users potentially change in the future? |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Prevention</p> <p>Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.</p> | What is the objective (or the desired outcome) of this proposal? |
| | How are you addressing these issues to prevent a future problem? |
| | How have the decisions, so far, come about? What alternatives were considered? |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Integration</p> | Are there any other organisations providing similar / complementary services? |

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| 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. | Have you consulted with the health board, third sector, emergency services, businesses and anyone else you think might be impacted? |
| | What practical steps will you take to integrate your project with existing plans and strategies of other public organisations to help us all contribute fully to the seven national well-being goals? |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Collaboration</p> Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself). | Who have you been working with? Why? Who have you collaborated with in finding out more about this problem and potential solutions? |
| | How are you co-working with other sectors? |
| | How are you using the knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence the Council's work? |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Involvement</p> The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves. | How have you involved the people who are being impacted by this decision? |
| | How have you taken into account the diverse communities in your decision making? |
| | How have you used different / alternative methods to reach people and involve them? |
| | How will you communicate the outcome of your decision? |

4.3 Suggested Lines of Enquiry

The Committee may wish to consider:

- How progress of compliance against the Strategic Equalities Plan is monitored
- Is the report a fair and honest reflection of current performance
- Whether all staff members, senior management and relevant stakeholders are effectively engaged effectively to deliver against the Plan

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 | A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment | Newport is a supportive city where communities and | Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that |

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| | education and aspires to provide opportunities for all. | whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future. | care are at the heart of what we do. | places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core. |
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6 Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act

Activities in relation to delivery of the Plan will support the Five Ways of Working under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Highlighting the key achievements, development of new policies and monitoring performances across the council will help the achieve a number of goals and targets and will contribute to the Wellbeing Goals of a prosperous Wales, a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

The report covers the work undertaken with strategic groups including the Strategic equality Group, stakeholders, and partners to achieve the strategic objectives. The key themes and actions in the report underpin them and balance short term needs with the delivery of medium to long-term solutions.

It identifies key successes towards the plan and shows how the council has worked towards each of the strategic objectives and how this is steering the work of the council, partners, and communities across Newport.

8. Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)
- [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24](#)
- [Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

Report Completed: August 2024