



## **CABINET – 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

**SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the progress made during the financial year 2020-2021 against actions in the Council's current Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, and for Cabinet to approve for publication on the Council's website.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce an annual report on equalities issues under current legislation. The requirements are very detailed as to what relevant information must be included in the annual report (attached in full as an appendix).
- 2.2 The amount of information presented is therefore in order to ensure that the regulatory body involved (the Equality and Human Rights Commission) are provided with full evidence of the Council's compliance and commitment to those statutory duties.
- 2.3 The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report must be published by the 31 March the following year.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 For Cabinet to approve the annual monitoring and improvement report for publication on the Council's website by the 31 March deadline.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The council is required under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce an annual report on the steps it has taken to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, and its own equality objectives as set out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales, an annual report on the Strategic Equality Plan must be published within 12 months after the end of the financial year that is covered by that report.
- 5.2 Appended to this report in Appendix A is the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021.
- 5.3 The report gives an overview of consultation and engagement exercises we undertook during 2020-2021, which was a challenging year due to the pandemic, and required us to find other methods of communicating messages and engaging with people. Key consultations include:
- The Caerphilly Conversation
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme
  - Active Travel (Stage 1) Consultation
  - Agile Working (staff survey)
- 5.4 The report highlights the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and how we helped our vulnerable residents via the Buddy Scheme and delivery of key services such as Social Services, Housing, Childcare Hubs, Free School Meals Deliveries, Early Years provision, Distance Learning, the Youth Service and efforts made to protect the local economy.
- 5.5 We developed, approved and published our new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, and a new Integrated Impact Assessment toolkit in light of the new requirement to consider the Socio-economic Duty in strategic decisions, which came into effect from 1 April 2021.
- 5.6 We also celebrated and marked some significant annual calendar dates, such as:
- Mental Health Awareness Week
  - Armed Forces Day
  - Pride Cymru
  - Diwrnod Shwmae
  - Black History Month
  - White Ribbon Day
  - Holocaust Memorial Day
  - International Women's Day
  - Zero Tolerance to Racism
- 5.7 **Conclusion**  
The report demonstrates the Council's progress during the financial year 2020-2021 against the actions in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in preparing this report.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment and consultation was undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 when being developed, therefore no full

assessment has been made on this annual report. The report itself is an assessment of work and progress made by the Council under the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and progress against the actions.

### **Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Equality Impact Assessment**

#### **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report as the annual report covers work already undertaken in the previous financial year.

#### **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Equalities data is included in the Workforce Development Strategy 2021–2024. In accordance with the action plan contained within the Strategy, work is ongoing to refine and enhance our equalities data with a view to reporting and publishing data to align with March 2022. Following the temporary additional funding for Workforce Development staff, the collation of training data is also a focus in line with the action plan.

#### **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 The report is based on data gathered across service areas on implementing the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and meeting the equality objectives during 2020-2021.
- 10.2 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.
- 10.3 The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021 came before the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 22 February 2022. One Member asked about the Gender Pay Gap which had been attributed to societal issues in the report and asked about opportunities for part-time working. The Head of People Services advised that because of caring responsibilities many employees took advantage of the Council's flexible working policy and chose to work on a part-time basis. Members heard how a robust pay grade structure ensured that males and females received the same pay grade for carrying out the same job titles and that a Gender Pay Gap statement would be published at the end of March with any issues raised being considered at a corporate level. The Committee Chair and the Member requested further clarification on part-time opportunities for senior roles within the Council. The Head of People Services advised Members that all posts are offered on variable contracts but that service needs had to be considered. It was highlighted that the opportunity to compress or reduce hours was available for some senior positions within the Council and that flexible working policies allowed all staff to request different working patterns.

In the report's recommendations the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee were asked to provide any comments on the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021 prior to Cabinet approval and publication on the Council's website.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011  
Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017  
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011  
Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015  
Human Rights Act 1998  
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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Consultees: Christina Harry – Chief Executive,  
Richard Edmunds – Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services  
Cllr James Pritchard – Deputy Leader and Equalities Champion  
Cllr Eluned Stenner – Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise  
Cllr Gez Kirby – Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr Brenda Miles – Deputy Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee  
Sue Richards – Head of Education Planning and Strategy  
Robert Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Lynne Donovan – Head of People Services  
Kathryn Peters – Service Improvement and Partnerships Manager  
Christopher Hunt – Community Cohesion Coordinator (West Gwent)  
Elizabeth Rees – HR Management Information Officer  
Elizabeth Sharma – Consultation and Engagement Officer  
Emma Bush – Educational Psychologist  
Gareth Jenkins – Assistant Director Children’s Services  
Jade Sallis – Policy Officer  
Jane Roberts-Waite – Strategic Coordination Manager – Housing  
Jo Williams – Assistant Director Adult Services  
Karen Williams – Customer Services Digital Hub Manager  
Lisa Rawlings – Regional Armed Forces Covenant Officer  
Liz Goodwin – ESF Coordinator  
Nick Rutter – Digital Communications Officer  
Paul Jones – Area Adult Education Manager  
Rhian Kyte – Head of Planning and Regeneration  
Ros Roberts – Business Improvement Manager  
Sarah-Jayne Irish – Development and Monitoring Manager  
Sarah Mutch – Early Years and Partnerships Manager

### Background Papers:

- Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
- Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Report to Cabinet on the 9 June 2021 – Welsh Language Standards Annual report 2020-2021
- Various Guidance Documents (*These are available electronically for information on the Intranet Portal and on the Council’s website at [www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities)*)

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** Integrated Impact Assessment  
Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021