

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

13 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2016 – 2020 ACTION PLAN

1. Purpose of report

To provide Cabinet Equalities Committee with an update on progress made in delivering the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016 - 2020 during 2016/17.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The SEP is a statutory plan that impacts on the whole of the council. It outlines seven equality objectives, namely:

1. Transportation;
2. Fostering good relations and awareness raising;
3. Our role as an employer;
4. Mental health;
5. Children;
6. Leisure, arts and culture;
7. Data.

2.2 The SEP also supports the following corporate priorities:

- Priority 2: Helping people to be more self-reliant
- Priority 3: Smarter use of resources

3. Background

3.1 The SEP was approved by Cabinet on 15 March 2016. A draft action plan was then developed to include all seven of the strategic equality objectives outlined in the SEP. Key / lead officers were consulted regarding the development of meaningful and achievable actions within their respective services.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Between 12 May 2016 and 22 June 2016 the council consulted with the public on the actions that sit under each strategic objective. The consultation included engagement with local equality and diversity groups.

4.2 47 actions were agreed and are outlined in appendix 1, together with an update against each one. Key points to note are:

a) Transportation

- 66 new dropped kerbs were installed as a result of our dropped kerb programme;
- The number of wheelchair accessible taxis has increased to 52 (hackney carriages and private hire).

b) Fostering good relations and awareness raising

- A “train the trainer” hate crime package has been developed. Hate Crime Awareness workshops are planned for BCBC and partner agencies from September 2017;
- BCBC is currently applying for renewal of its ‘White Ribbon Town’ status. White Ribbon campaigns are undertaken annually - white ribbons are handed out to members of the public and self-referrals are taken. The incidents of domestic abuse reported to South Wales Police since 2012/13 and the referrals to the Assia Suite - which offers staff and members of the public access to domestic abuse advice and support - are outlined within the SEP Action Plan.

c) Our role as an employer

- The recruitment and selection managers’ guidelines have been updated and launched. A new e-learning module has been implemented which includes good practice guidance relating to equality in the recruitment process;
- Further work is progressing on the Disability Confident Employer commitment to assess practice against the standards;
- Promotion of Care First services has been undertaken through briefing sessions by the Care First contract manager, monthly ‘Bridgenders’ messages to staff and an all-staff email from the Chief Executive about wellbeing services available.

d) Mental health

- Relationships with the ABMU Delivery Board are developing well and this work continues to be part of the service development plan and Western Bay partnership working;
- Significant progress has been made in improving accessibility of / to information through the development of local community coordination, the service provided through ARC, information provision through DEWIS and infoengine, development of community hubs, the GP referral scheme, the ‘Ageing well in Bridgend’ initiative and partnership work to deliver the prevention and wellbeing agenda.

e) Leisure

- The over 60 national free swimming initiative achieves 80,000 visits per annum. There are over 1,200 regular members using facilities on a membership scheme over the age of 60;
- The Girls Network led by young girls has achieved charitable status and developed 11 network groups across the county borough;
- Halo supports community groups, projects and initiatives for protected characteristic groups such as rebound trampolining, hydrogym, Girls

Network programme and Health Board partnership working. A Dementia swimming project has commenced and around 600 disabled people are part of Halo's membership scheme.

f) Children

- 47 Gypsy and Traveller pupils have attended 17 schools in Bridgend in the current academic year. Their attendance ranged between 64% and 95%. 35 pupils received 59 support sessions on a weekly basis in 7 schools;
- The IS Minority Ethnic Achievement and Gypsy and Traveller Education Service teams attended Show Racism the Red Card's 'Promoting Equality and Tackling Racism practitioners conference on 19 October 2016. Funding has been identified for further Show Racism the Red Card workshops to be held in 2017/18.

g) Data

- Between February 2016 and January 2017 the council produced nine full Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and 42 EIA screenings. EIA data is reported to Cabinet Equalities Committee annually;
- As a result of the Formal Complaints process, seven Equality Monitoring Forms have been received.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 The report has no direct effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

Following the consultation, a full EIA was undertaken which highlighted that the SEP and associated action plan will have a positive impact on most of the protected characteristic groups. As this is an information report, no further EIA is required at this time.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 Any financial implications described within the SEP action plan will be met from within existing directorate budgets.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this report and appendix.

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Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services

Date: 21 June 2017

9. Contact officers:

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Background papers: None