

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES

7 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ACTION PLAN REPORT (UPDATE ON WORK
UNDERTAKEN BY DIRECTORATES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS)**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet Committee Equalities with an update on progress made in delivering the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016 - 2020 during 2019/2020. This is the fourth and final annual review for this plan.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 The 2016-2020 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 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following public consultation the council's SEP (2016-2020) was approved by

Cabinet on 15 March 2016.

- 3.2 Further consultation with the public and local equality and diversity groups took place during May and June 2016 in order to develop the action plan which would support achievement of the seven objectives in the SEP over the four year period. Key/ lead officers were consulted regarding the development of meaningful and achievable actions within their respective services. The final action plan is a live document and contains 47 actions and was approved by Cabinet Committee Equalities in July 2016. The action plan is attached as a background document to this report (appendix one).
- 3.3. Cabinet Committee Equalities have received three updates on progress. Progress during 2016/17 was presented in the committee meeting in July 2017, progress during 2017/18 was presented in July 2018 and progress during 2018/19 was presented in July 2019.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 Progress for 2019/2020 is documented in appendix one. Key points to note are:

a) Transportation

- 112 junctions were treated at various locations throughout the borough and had dropped kerbs installed.
- A mystery shopper exercise was carried out by our enforcement team to fact find on driver behaviour and attitudes when carrying passengers using wheelchairs in Bridgend. While no issues of concern were found the exercise will be repeated to build up a fuller picture of customer experiences.
- Operator telephone numbers now appear on the published list of wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- Bridgend Community Transport (BCT) vehicles are specially adapted for passengers with additional mobility needs. Passenger numbers on BCT's Town Rider service is increasing by approximately 15% each year.

b) Fostering good relations and awareness raising

- During 2019/2020 regular Hate Crime awareness sessions have taken place across the County Borough. A total of 82 sessions took place in which we engaged with 1881 people.
- During Hate Crime awareness week joint South Wales Police and BCBC events were held in Bridgend, Garw Valley, Ogmore Valley, Porthcawl, Pyle, Brackla, Maesteg, Caerau, Pencoed, Sarn, Ynysawdre and Bryntirion.
- BCBC has promoted campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the BCBC website, including:
 - Foster care fortnight 2019
 - International Women's Day
 - Wartime Bridgend
 - Armed Forces day
 - Shwmae Sumae day
 - Welsh Language Rights day

- Changing Places awareness day
- Step out for stroke
- Pride Cymru 2019
- Olympage games 2019
- Hate Crime awareness week 2019,
- White ribbon campaign
- LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week
- BCBC marked Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 with public event, held at the Sony Theatre, Bridgend College. The theme for the 2020 event, which is provided by the Holocaust Memorial Trust was 'Stand Together' and aimed to encourage attendees to stand together with their friends, colleagues and neighbours to speak out against oppression.
- Following a series of meetings between WLGA, Community Cohesion Coordinators and preferred providers for delivering hate crime projects, a number of schools in Bridgend were identified on the basis of analysis on reported hate crime in the community, anti-social behaviour in the area and discussions with the school liaison officers.
The five schools identified were:
 - Brynteg School
 - Bryntirion Comprehensive School
 - Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen
 - Maesteg School
 - Pencoed Comprehensive School
- To date over 4,900 employees have completed the training module on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

c) Our role as an employer

- 26 front line employees attended LGBTQI awareness training delivered by Stonewall.
- The EIA e-learning module continues to be available for employees, 18 managers undertook this training during 2019/20.
- The Access to Work scheme is promoted to all employees and included in the corporate induction protocol. New starters are supported to make application as and when appropriate.
- The wide range of resources available to employees and elected members via the Employee Assistance Programme and delivered by Care First have been widely and regularly promoted.
- Additional resources provided to support employees during the COVID-19 pandemic have been promoted on a weekly basis via a dedicated 'COVID-19 Employee Wellbeing' intranet page. This has included access to daily webinars.

d) Mental health

- This is the first year of working in a new region and developing new regional partnerships with the Health Board and Local Authorities. A number of discussions and workshops have taken place to establish the ongoing service and operational models of support across the services including support for carers and families.

- In Bridgend there has been extensive engagement and consultation undertaken with service users, families and stakeholders to develop and implement the new service model for carers, which focuses on voice, choice and control for individuals.
- Progress continues to be made across Social Services with the information, advice and assistance service via the MASH for children's and the Common Access Point for adults. In adults this is being prioritised via the availability of Welsh Government transformation fund. This will enable the further development of this service over an extended period.
- The Bridgend Carers Wellbeing Service continues to develop in the county borough and the service continues to support carers through pre-emptive information advice and support Partnership working continues and a performance framework is being developed.
- BCBC and BAVO are active in the regional social prescribing network across Cwm Taf Morgannwg region.

e) Children

- Updates on the progression and well-being of families under the Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme discussed with SWP Hate Crime Officer weekly, Taf Housing and ESOL Lecturer at Bridgend College. Regular engagement with community leader at the local Mosque, to help ensure the wellbeing of Syrian families that are part of the congregation.
- The Local Authority ensures that each respective schools Anti-Bullying Policy is in date, and where incidents are raised by members of the public, that schools have acted in accordance to their policies.
- Show Racism the Red Card have delivered workshops in schools throughout the county, promoting an anti-bullying and anti-racism message. The sessions included a resource pack that we can share with other schools (post session delivery). Sessions included critical thinking, conflict resolutions and unconscious bias.

f) Leisure, arts and culture

- Discovery and after school programmes supported 70 households with children/young people with additional needs to access community opportunities.
- Continued growth of opportunities for older adults, carers and people living with dementia via dementia swimming, dance, creative activities. Both Halo and Awen are supporting these programmes.
- Halo Leisure have worked with parents and carers of children/young people with autism have developed an autism friendly swimming programme.
- Joint working has taken place between Halo Leisure and Bridgend Carers Centre to better understand the wellbeing needs of carers. Awen have supported the Carers choir ongoing development and also collated podcast information.
- The active young people programmes operated in partnership with schools have continued. There has been a focus on the impact of disadvantage and gender on participation. New models have been developed supporting girls, young carers and looked after children.

- Awen have continued to operate the Hynt scheme providing free access for carers.
- Following the reduction in Welsh Government Free Swimming investment for the over 60's the Access to Leisure scheme has provided low cost continued access to a broader range of activities. Circa 400 older adults have taken up a membership related offer.
- Work commenced on the redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall and co-location of services recognising changing places accessibility requirements.
- An Ageing Well calendar has been created featuring wellbeing advice, partnerships and services and 4000 copies have been distributed.

g) Data

- Equality monitoring continues to be included in all public consultations. Relevant information is shared with services to help inform their EIA.
- In 2019/2020 we engaged with over 18,000 residents across the County Borough through a range of consultations and engagement sessions.
- Public consultation respondents continue to be asked if they would like to be informed of the outcome of consultations, and where relevant information is shared when the consultation report is publically available.
- Details of consultations, outcomes and next steps are shared on the closed consultation page of the website.
- As a result of the formal complaints process, four equality monitoring forms have been processed.
- Equalities data is gathered for all new employees and we continue to promote the employee self-service system to encourage existing staff to complete/update their personal data.
- Between February 2019 and March 2020 the council produced eight full EIAs and 68 EIA screenings. An Equality Impact assessment annual report continues to be presented to Cabinet Committee Equalities.

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

6.1 Following the consultation in 2016, 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. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

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

9. Recommendation

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

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Chief Executive

Date: 7 October 2020

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Background papers:

Appendix one SEP action plan update 2019-2020