

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

8 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the work completed within the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020 – 2024 for the period 2020 - 2021.

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

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 sets out both general and specific duties for local authorities in Wales. The specific duties include the development of a SEP to identify the council's equality objectives and the publication of an annual report.

- 2.2 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

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.

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 The SEP annual report enables the council to:

- monitor and review progress against its strategic equality objectives;
- review its objectives and processes in light of any new legislation and other new developments;
- engage with relevant stakeholders around equality objectives, providing transparency;

- include relevant updates on equality impact assessments, procurement arrangements and training.

Specifically, the report sets out:

- the steps taken to identify and collect relevant information;
- any reasons for not collecting relevant information;
- where appropriate, employment information, including information on training and pay.

3.2 Progress made by the council on each of its six equality objectives is included in the report, which will be of interest to:

- Elected Members;
- Members of the community and community groups;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- Welsh Government.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The annual report (Appendix 1) covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The annual report must be published on the council website/made available by 1 April 2022.

4.2 Our six strategic equalities objectives for 2020 – 2024 are:

- Education
- Work
- Living standards
- Health and wellbeing
- Safety and respect
- Participation

4.3 Some key points to note from the annual report are:

- Work is ongoing to promote Disability Confident scheme – Disability Confident Employer badge is now visible on Jobs Pages and Equal Opportunities page of BCBC website. The Disability Confident Action Plan has been updated and the Disability Confident self-assessment has been undertaken and completed. The Disability Confident Employer badge has been received, which is valid up to 28/11/2023.
- During 2020-21, two LGBT courses were delivered with 17 delegates attending.
- The Health and Wellbeing protocol has been developed, and was launched in October 2020, following consultation with trade union representatives. Staff can access this via the intranet and the range of other wellbeing resources available. A part time Health and Wellbeing

Officer has been appointed who will take the wellbeing agenda forward and ensure all staff are aware of the wellbeing resources and support available.

- In 2020-21, the following courses were delivered in conjunction with Valley Steps and WULF (Wales Union Learning Fund):
 - Mindfulness – 4 courses delivered / 37 delegates attended
 - Resilience – 4 courses delivered / 45 delegates attended
 - Confidence in the Workplace – 4 courses delivered / 38 delegates attended
 - Communication in the workplace – 5 courses delivered / 50 delegates attended

- Between December 2020 and April 2021, Small Steps delivered Far Right Extremism Awareness and Counter Narrative Training to 176 members of staff, key partners and community groups.

- BCBC worked with seven other local authorities to promote LGBTQ+ history month by producing and promoting a calendar of events, information, webinars and Q&A sessions. The calendar was promoted on Proud Councils social media accounts and BCBC corporate social media accounts. The Proud Councils - Proud Insights Event was shared with all staff during LGBTQ+ history month.

- BCBC have carried out face to face engagement (online meetings) with Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum on the BCBC Strategic Equality Plan and Fit for the Future consultation. Details of the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan consultation were shared with all members of BCCEF via email, and members were asked to share details of the consultation within their own networks.

- BCBC have promoted campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the BCBC website, including:
 - Foster care fortnight 2020
 - Woman of Wales event
 - LGBT fostering – throughout year
 - Youth support
 - Hate hurts Wales – hate crime
 - World autism week
 - EU settlement
 - ARC mental health – throughout year
 - Welsh in the workplace
 - Youth justice launch of new website
 - International Women's Day
 - Armed Forces day
 - Shwmae Sumae day

- World Environment Day
- St Dwynwens Day
- Welsh Language Rights day
- Digital pride
- Hate Crime awareness week 2020,
- Domestic abuse launch of assia
- LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Young Carers Action Day
- Live fear free from abuse
- LGBTQ History Month
- Show Racism the Red Card workshops (Equalities training for schools)
- World Mental Health Day – Civic offices turn green
- Remembrance day
- Black history month
- Hanukkah
- Diwali
- Iaith gwaith
- International Men's day

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 As this is an information report, there is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an EIA in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

Long-term -The consideration and approval of this report will assist in supporting equalities objectives the short-term and in the long term.

Prevention - The Strategic Equality Plan aims to identify issues that are relevant in our community and workforce and set objectives to prevent problems from occurring.

Integration - The Strategic Equality plan supports all the wellbeing objectives and ensures integration for all people with protected characteristics.

Collaboration - The creation of and the monitoring of the Strategic Equality Plan is done in collaboration with all council services and the community.

Involvement - Publication of the report ensures that the public and stakeholders can review the work that has been undertaken.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications identified as this is an information/update report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That the Cabinet notes the progress being made and approves the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021.

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Background papers: **None**