

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
23 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an update on the work completed within the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020 – 2024 for the period 2021 - 2022.

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 2021 to 31 March 2022. The annual report must be published on the council website/made available by 1 April 2023.

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:

- The council has held its status as a Disability Confident Employer since 2016 which will be reviewed in November 2023.
- Collaboration has taken place between the council and Remploy, the UK's leading disability specialist in transforming lives through sustainable employment, on recruitment. This has involved supporting their clients to apply for vacancies in the council and appointments have been made as a result.
- The Equality Awareness Workshop has been updated to include Unconscious Bias, Critical Thinking and Hidden Disabilities. Three workshops have been held with 24 delegates attending.
- The council continued to make progress on appointing apprentices, with 40 employed during 2021/2022. The council has appointed two graduates as part of its corporate graduate programme.
- There has been regular health and wellbeing employee communications which promote a wide range of physical activities to enable self-help. Some examples include:

- Cycle to Work
 - Partnership working with Halo
 - Nature walks
 - World Cancer Day
 - Wellbeing Checklist to include physical activity
 - Eating disorders
 - Nutrition & Hydration week
 - World Sleep day
 - World Oral Health day
- In 2021 we promoted an online calendar of events for LGBTQI+ history month that was shared via social media and internally with staff. Proud Councils also worked together this year to create an art competition around Pride Cymru on the theme "becoming me".
- BCBC continued to work with community and equality groups within the Bridgend Community Cohesion Forum (BCCEF). Representatives from across a wide range of community organisations met quarterly to share practice, receive joint briefings and training. All members are invited to share information about BCCEF with other organisations with the aim to increase membership and representation.
- BCBC have promoted campaigns via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the BCBC website, including:
 - Foster care fortnight 2020
 - Social care jobs – wecarewales
 - Day of reflection
 - Woman of Wales event
 - LGBT fostering – throughout year
 - Youth support
 - Hate hurts Wales – hate crime
 - Childcare offer
 - Give blood
 - Community testing
 - World autism week
 - EU settlement
 - ARC mental health – throughout year
 - Senedd election
 - Register to vote – foreign and 16s citizens
 - Early help launch of new website
 - Chinese New Year – year of the ox
 - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
 - Welsh in the workplace
 - Youth justice launch of new website
 - Volunteer week
 - 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
- World Social worker day
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Young Carers Action Day
- Live fear free from abuse
- Apprenticeship week
- LGBTQ History Month
- National wind rush day
- 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
- Carers rights day
- Safeguarding week

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 Committee notes the progress being made.

Mark Shephard
Chief Executive
8 March 2021

Contact officers: Alix Howells
 Consultation, Engagement and Equalities
 Manager

Telephone: 01656 643664

Email: alix.howells@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal address: Civic Offices,
 Angel Street
 Bridgend
 CF31 4WB

 Philip O'Brien
 Group Manager – Transformation and Customer
 Services

Telephone: 01656 643333

Email: Philip.OBrien@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal address: Civic Offices,
 Angel Street

Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background papers: **None**