

**CABINET**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	15 September 2015
<b>Report Subject</b>	Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2014/15 and Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Executive Member - Corporate Services
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Council has a statutory duty to produce annual monitoring reports for its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and its Welsh Language Scheme (WLS). The reports are attached as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. The reports include a RAG status in relation to overall progress and confidence in achieving actions and targets.

**SEP**

The annual report sets out progress being made to meet the Council's equality objectives and SEP. The annual report identifies areas of good practice and areas of improvement, notably:

- Data collection – more systematic data collection and analysis across services is needed to be able to identify areas for improvement and measure progress and outcomes;
- Equality and Welsh language impact assessments need to be undertaken more systematically and robustly before decisions are made about service changes; and
- All employees need to complete the diversity audit which is available on iTrent.

**WLS**

This will be the final annual monitoring report of the Welsh Language Scheme as the Scheme will be replaced by the Welsh Language Standards in September 2015. This annual report highlights the Council's progress in implementing the WLS during 2014/2015 and showcases examples of good practice. Areas of improvement include:

- All employees need to complete the Welsh language skills audit which is available on iTrent;
- An increased number of employees should complete the Bilingual Customer Care training.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To be assured that adequate progress has been made during the year to meet our statutory duties.
2. To recommend that Corporate Resources and Overview Scrutiny Committee monitor progress of the revised SEP and the implementation of the new Welsh Language Standards as part of their forward work programme.
3. To agree to the publication of the reports on the Council's website and the submission of the Welsh Language Scheme annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 AND WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2014/15</b>
1.01	<p><b>Annual Monitoring Report : Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)</b>  The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) 2011 requires the local authority to develop a SEP by no later than 2nd April 2012. The SEP must contain a statement setting out a description of the local authority, the authority's equality objectives, details of the steps the authority has taken or intends to take in order to fulfil its objectives, how long it will take in order to fulfil its objectives, and details of arrangements it has made or intends to make to comply with these Regulations. The SEP can be revised or remade at any time.</p> <p>Progress on meeting this duty and achieving the objectives set out in the SEP must be published annually by 31st March.</p>
1.02	<p><b>Progress</b>  Progress is being made to meet the actions identified in the SEP. There have been some outstanding areas of achievement during 2014/15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Youth Service worked with Save the Children to support young Travellers contribute to developing a Hate Crime DVD. This has been shown in Westminster and in several European Parliaments.</li> <li>• 21 disabled children were successfully supported to attend "Quayplay" via the accompanying Buddy scheme. The quality of the provision at Quayplay was recognised by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).</li> </ul>

1.03	<p><b>Areas for improvement</b></p> <p>Although there has been progress in this area of work, specific areas for improvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collection – more systematic data collection and analysis across services is needed to be able to identify areas for improvement and measure progress and outcomes.</li> <li>• Equality and Welsh language impact assessments need to be undertaken more systematically and robustly before decisions are made about service changes.</li> <li>• All employees need to complete the diversity audit which is available on iTrent.</li> <li>• There needs to be an increased number of employees completing the equality e-learning packages.</li> </ul>
1.04	<p><b>Annual Monitoring Report: Welsh Language Scheme (WLS)</b></p> <p>Prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993, the Welsh Language Scheme received the full endorsement of the Welsh Language Board in March 2010. The Scheme requires the local authority to submit a Monitoring Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner by June each year although a revised deadline of September 2015 has been agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner. This will be the final annual monitoring report of the Welsh Language Scheme as the Scheme will be replaced by the Welsh Language Standards in September 2015.</p>
1.05	<p><b>Progress</b></p> <p>The annual report shows that the Council is meeting many of the commitments set out in WLS, there are also examples of services being developed to meet the needs of Welsh speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services has developed a Welsh Language Reminiscence initiative for Welsh speaking people with dementia and their families. As part of the initiative reminiscences boxes have been designed for Welsh speakers and Welsh people or people who may have grown up or have strong links with Wales. The boxes contain sensory and memory aids and written material in Welsh. They are also specifically designed for Flintshire which means they have been developed in line with local Welsh cultures, traditions and heritage.</li> <li>• Through working in partnership with Menter Iaith, Sir Y Fflint, Leisure services were able to provide swimming lessons through the medium of Welsh.</li> </ul>
1.06	<p><b>Areas for improvement</b></p> <p>Although the Council is successfully implementing many of the Scheme's commitments, there are some areas of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All employees need to complete the Welsh language skills audit is available on iTrent; to date approximately 40% of employees have completed the audit.</li> <li>• An increased number of employees should complete the Bilingual Customer Care training; this will help increase language awareness and understanding of language choice.</li> </ul>

1.07	<p><b>Moving Forward</b></p> <p>The relevant actions from both the SEP and future compliance with the Welsh Language Standards will be incorporated into the new performance management system. This will facilitate easier reporting for services in the future and support new post holders in awareness of their responsibilities.</p> <p>A further report will be presented on the new Welsh Language Standards and implications for the Council.</p>
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<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	<p>Implementing the recommendations of this report will have implications for employees. Chief Officers will need to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equality and Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken; and</li> <li>• employees have the time and are supported to complete the Bilingual Customer Care training, equality e-learning modules and the Welsh language skills and diversity audit.</li> </ul>
2.02	<p>Financial resources are available through the Corporate Training budget to meet training costs.</p>

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	<p>Equality Representatives and relevant officers were consulted in order to update both the action plans and provide information for the annual reports.</p>

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	<p>Producing the Strategic Equality Plan and annual report supports the Council to meet its statutory duties under equality legislation. Failure to complete equality impact assessments on decisions and policies could result in legal challenge. The implementation of the new Welsh Language Standards will be monitored by the Welsh Language Commissioner.</p>

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	<p>Appendix 1: Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2014/15 Appendix 2: Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15</p>

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>None</p> <p>Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko  Job Title: Policy Advisor (Equalities and Cohesion)  Telephone: 01352 702122  Email: <a href="mailto:Fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk">Fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
	<p><b>Quayplay:</b> a Summer play scheme held at Connah's Quay Sports Centre, delivered by Leisure Services</p>