

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 12 July 2018
Report Subject	Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2016/18 and Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2017/18
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Report Author	Chief Executive
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present both the annual Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2016/18 (Appendix 1) and Welsh Language Annual Monitoring 2017/18 (Appendix 2).

All devolved public authorities in Wales are required by the public sector equality duties (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 to identify and publish equality objectives and produce a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), every four years, and report on progress.

The Council has a statutory duty to publish an annual report setting out how it has met the Welsh Language Standards (WLS). The Standards which the Council has to comply with are set out in a Compliance Notice. These are unique to each organisation and specify what the organisations are expected to implement in Welsh and by when they are required to comply.

This report provides an overview of progress to complying with the Equality Act and Welsh Language Standards and identifies areas for improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers and reviews the annual reports.
2	The Committee notes area of progress and areas for improvement.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN AND WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORTS
1.01	<p>Strategic Equality Plan</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 placed a specific duty on public bodies which requires them to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw up a strategic equality plan • prepare and publish equality objectives • publish objectives to address pay differences • produce an annual report by 31 March each year. <p>The aim of these duties is to ensure the delivery of positive outcomes for people with protected characteristics through evidenced based objectives. The protected characteristics are; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.</p>
1.02	<p>The equality objectives set out in the Strategic Equality Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce health inequalities • Reduce unequal outcomes in Education to maximise individual potential • Reduce inequalities in employment • Reduce inequalities in Personal Safety • Reduce inequalities in Representation and Voice • Reduce inequalities in access to information and services, buildings and the environment
1.03	<p>There have been some outstanding areas of achievement:</p> <p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing programme of physical alterations to schools enabling disabled pupils to fully access facilities • Publication of the Equal Pay Audit • A rolling programme of Disability Inclusion Training provided to Leisure Centre employees (now Aura) • Increasing the number of Dementia Friendly communities and businesses and number of Memory cafes established. <p>Welsh Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services are implementing the “More than Just Words Framework” which places them in a strong position to comply with the Standards and deliver bilingual services. • Theatr Clwyd has been active in raising the profile of Welsh language throughout all their activities, including producing and co-producing

	<p>Welsh language shows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Welsh medium schools achieved the Siarter Iaith Silver award for their increased use of Welsh in social settings and are now working towards Gold. • The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is being updated and is an important strategy for increasing the number of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh and, over time, the pool of potential Welsh speaking employees • In 2017/18 just over 87% of employees completed the Welsh language skills audit, compared to 82% on March 31st 2017. Completion of the audit provides baseline data to inform a strategy for managers to plan how they will deliver bilingual services. Further initiatives to increase the response rate to the audit will be introduced over the next 12 months • The development of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy with the support for community and business involvement as equal partners.
1.04	<p>An area of progress across both equality and Welsh language policy areas has been the development of an integrated impact assessment (IIA). This assessment provides an overview of direct impacts affecting different groups of people as well as the natural environment (biodiversity). These are the 3 statutory areas of assessment to be undertaken, but we have developed the assessment process to also consider other impacts such as health and poverty.</p> <p>In addition, because the assessment process is undertaken within CAMMS (the Council's performance and project management system), all the information is collated in one place and various aspects of data can be used for different purposes. This reduces duplication and also enables consideration of any wider compound implications which may be impacted by cumulative effects of differing options, for example, multiple effects on young people.</p> <p>This co-ordinated approach will enable a reduction to any negative impacts that have been identified.</p> <p>IAs are being used in a number of ways: firstly as part of the considerations for future operational efficiency options and also on specific stand-alone projects such as the Local Development Plan, ensuring that impacts have been identified, understood and considered.</p>
1.05	<p>Although there are positive areas of progress, some issues remain as areas for improvement:</p> <p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection – more systematic data collection of the profile of customers and analysis of the data across services is needed to be able to identify areas for improvement and measure progress and outcomes for protected groups. • More employees need to complete the Diversity Audit which will contribute towards the Workforce Information Report and Equal

	<p>Pay Audit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a small number of employees have completed the e-learning modules. Training on equality is a statutory requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty for all employees. • Equality impact assessments need to be undertaken more systematically and robustly before decisions are made about service changes; this is being addressed through the use of a revised Integrated Impact Assessment (as referred to in 1.04). <p>Welsh Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More employees need to complete the Welsh language awareness training. This shows the link between Welsh language, good customer care and high quality services. • The results of the Welsh language skills audit show that less than 4% of employees are fluent Welsh speakers and approximately 37% employees have no Welsh skills. This profile will need to change over time to increase the number of Welsh speaking employees and reduce the number of employees without any knowledge of the Welsh language. This will support the Council to deliver bilingual services and meet the needs of Welsh speaking customers. • More take-up is needed of the Welsh language training courses provided by the Council, to help change the profile of the Council's Welsh speakers. • Promotion of the use of Welsh in the Council (both as a business and as a place to socialise) • Welsh language impact assessments need to be systematically included within consultations and decision-making.
1.06	<p>There have been four complaints relating to Welsh language during 2017/18, compared to 15 complaints received during 2016/17. They relate to telephone calls, the website and social media. Various methods of communication are being considered to promote employees' responsibilities.</p>
1.07	<p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mid-year report on the areas for improvement will be considered by Cabinet. • Relevant actions from the SEP will be incorporated into CAMMS, the Council's performance management system to facilitate easier reporting and monitoring. • Workforce communications will be published to increase the number of employees who complete the e-learning modules for equality and Welsh language. • Increased awareness and support for internally-provided Welsh Language training courses to encourage managers and employees to improve take-up. • Completion of the integrated impact assessment tool during decision making • Regular communications regarding compliance with and celebration

	of the Welsh Language Standards will be cascaded to the workforce.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	A training programme is required to ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to meet these statutory duties. A budget for equalities and Welsh language training is held by the Learning and Development Team.

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

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>The purpose of the SEP is to ensure the Council is meeting its statutory duty to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and foster good community relations for people who live in, work and visit Flintshire. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination will contribute to addressing poverty experienced by people across all protected groups.</p> <p>Meeting the Welsh Language Standards will promote equality for Welsh speakers in service delivery and for Council Welsh speaking employees. They will ensure that the Council considers the impact of policies and decisions on both Welsh speakers and the Welsh language to promote positive impact and eliminate/reduce negative impact.</p> <p>Actions are being taken as described in the body of the report to ensure that awareness of the Standards and their compliance is supported.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2016/18 Appendix 2 Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2017/18

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Strategic Equality Plan 2016/2020</p> <p>Welsh Language Compliance Notice</p> <p>Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: 01352 702122</p>

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7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>CAMMS: an integrated planning, risk management and Programme / project management and reporting system.</p> <p>Compliance Notice: specifies the exact Welsh Language Standards that each organisation should have to comply with and also the date by which they are required to comply with a standard.</p> <p>Diversity Audit: is the collection and analysis of information on the profile of customers and employees, for example, people's age range, disability, gender reassignment, ethnic group, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation to identify actual or potential inequalities.</p> <p>Equality impact assessments: is the process to identify the impact of a proposal/decision/policy/initiative on people with protected characteristics</p> <p>Integrated impact assessments: an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is a way to look at how a proposal could affect communities and if different groups within the community will be affected differently. It takes into consideration impacts on the environment, equality, health and Welsh language.</p> <p>More Than Just Words Framework: Welsh Government Framework to strengthen Welsh language services in health, social services and social care.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: these are the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. The characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.</p> <p>PSED: Public Sector Equality Duty, places a General Duty and Specific Duty on public bodies. The General Duty requires public bodies to show due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and foster good relations. The Specific Duty in Wales requires public bodies to develop equality objectives and publish Strategic Equality Plans. It also includes the requirement to train employees, assess impact of decisions and undertake equality monitoring.</p> <p>Welsh In Education Strategic Plan: the Council's plan setting out how it will support, expand and promote Welsh-medium education within the whole community, increasing the number and percentage of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in compliance with the Welsh Government's 'Welsh-Medium Education Strategy' of developing learners who are fully bilingual.</p> <p>Welsh Language Measure: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011: confirms the official status of Welsh, creates a new system of placing duties</p>

on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh and creating the post of Language Commissioner with enforcement powers.

Welsh Language Scheme: previous policy stating the Council's commitment to the Welsh language, this includes an action plan setting out how it plans to deliver bilingual services. The Standards have replaced Schemes.

Welsh Language Standards: specific standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.