



## **CABINET – 19TH MARCH 2025**

**SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the progress made during the financial year 2023-2024 against actions in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, and for Cabinet to approve for publication on the Council's website.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce an annual report on equalities issues under current legislation. The requirements are very detailed as to what relevant information must be included in the annual report (attached in full as Appendix 1).
- 2.2 The amount of information presented is therefore in order to ensure that the regulatory body involved (the Equality and Human Rights Commission) are provided with full evidence of the Council's compliance and commitment to those statutory duties.
- 2.3 The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report must be published by the 31 March the following year.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 For Cabinet to approve the annual report for publication on the Council's website by the 31 March deadline.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The council is required under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce an annual report on the steps it has taken to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, and its own equality objectives as set

out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

## **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales, an annual report on the Strategic Equality Plan must be published within 12 months after the end of the financial year that is covered by that report.
- 5.2 Appended to this report in Appendix 1 is the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023-2024.
- 5.3 The report gives an overview of consultation and engagement exercises we undertook during 2023-2024, which include:
- The Caerphilly Conversation – Council Budget Setting 2024-2025
  - Caerphilly Leisure and Well-being Hub
  - Various Active Travel Routes – Ystrad Mynach; Lansbury Park and Van Road; and Wattsville – Risca
  - The Meals Direct Service
- 5.4 The report provides a brief snapshot of some key decisions the Council made during 2023-2024. Particular focus in the report has been given to:
- Corporate Plan 2023-2028
  - Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028
  - Pride in Veterans Standard
  - Motor Neurone Disease Charter
- 5.5 We celebrated and marked many significant calendar dates, including:
- Pride Month
  - Youth Work Week
  - Black History Month
  - White Ribbon Day
  - Welsh Language Rights Day (Mae Gen i Hawl)
  - Diwrnod Shwmae
  - Holocaust Memorial Day
  - LGBT History Month
  - St. David's Day
  - International Women's Day
  - Safeguarding Week
  - St Dwynwen's Day
- 5.6 Also highlighted in the report are six case studies, with each in their own right making a positive difference to the lives of residents with protected characteristics. The six case studies are:
- Refugee Week

- Communities for Work Plus (CfW+)
- Ukrainian Crisis
- Library Service - Empowering Our Community One Word at a Time!
- Cost of Living Support
- Community Development Team

5.7 The progress against the actions in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 have either been met or are progressing well. Those that have not progressed well or enough are included in the Council's new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.

## 5.8 **Conclusion**

The report demonstrates the Council's progress during the financial year 2023-2024 against the actions in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

5.9 The report was taken to CMT/Leadership Team on 22 January, and Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 18 February.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in preparing this report.

The information and data detailed in the report are progress updates from across service areas on implementing the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and meeting the equality objectives during 2023-2024.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment and consultation was undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 when being developed, therefore no full assessment has been made on this annual report. The report itself is an assessment of work and progress made by the Council under the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and progress against the actions.

[Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Impact Assessment](#)

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report as the annual report covers work already undertaken in the previous financial year.

## 9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Equalities data is included in the Workforce Development Strategy 2021–2024. In accordance with the action plan contained within the Strategy, work is ongoing to refine and enhance our equalities data with a view to reporting

and publishing data to align with March 2024. Following the additional funding for Workforce Development staff, the collation of training data is also a focus in line with the action plan.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 The report is based on information and data gathered across service areas on implementing the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and meeting the equality objectives during 2023-2024.
- 10.2 The “Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023-2024” was considered by the Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2025.
- 10.3 One Member requested more detail on the Council’s status as a Level 2 Disability Confident employer. The Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Welsh Language advised that the Authority was working towards reaching the top Level 3 position and outlined how the status related to organisations.
- 10.4 On the Disability by Directorate figures a Member observed that 210 employers identifying as disabled out of 8,670 did not seem particularly high. The Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Welsh Language highlighted that not everybody with a disability wished to disclose it to their employer. Details were also given on the Council’s guaranteed interview scheme for job applicants with a declared disability if they met the essential requirements for the position.
- 10.5 It was moved and seconded that the recommendation (3.1) be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 15 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was agreed unanimously.
- 10.6 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011  
Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017  
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011  
Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015  
Human Rights Act 1998  
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Author: Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer – Equalities and Welsh Language  
cullima@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive

Mark S Williams, Corporate Director – Economy and Environment  
 Gareth Jenkins, Interim Corporate Director Social Services  
 Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance  
 Cllr Philippa Leonard, Cabinet Member for Planning and Public  
 Protection and Equalities Champion  
 Cllr Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Social Care and LGBTQ+  
 Champion  
 Cllr Gary Johnston, Chair of Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny  
 Cllr Amanda McConnell, Vice-Chair of Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny  
 Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer  
 Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy and Programme  
 Director Place Shaping  
 Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services  
 Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
 Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager  
 Allan Dallimore, Regeneration Services Manager  
 Becky Griffiths, Service Manager – Adult Services  
 Caroline Millington, Area Community Education Worker  
 Christopher Hunt, Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator  
 Elizabeth Sharma, Consultation and Public Engagement Officer  
 Geraint Ashton, Policy Officer – Equalities and Welsh Language  
 Gwyn Williams, Digital Services Manager  
 Hayley Lancaster, Transformation Manager – Insights and Intelligence  
 Heather Delonnette, Senior Policy Officer – Policy and Partnerships  
 Huw Jordan, Housing Strategy Officer  
 Karen Pugh, Senior Manager, Libraries  
 Karen Williams, Customer Services Hub Manager  
 Kath Thomas, Resettlement Lead Policy Officer  
 Lauren Hughes, Area Regeneration Coordinator  
 Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
 Louise Aston, Lead Employment Support Officer  
 Neil Cooksley, Workforce Development Manager  
 Nick Rutter, Digital Communications Officer  
 Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN  
 Sarah Mutch, Early Years and Partnerships Manager  
 Saran Pope, Library Operations and Resource Manager

#### **Background Papers:**

- **Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024**
- **Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**
- Report to Cabinet on the 16 May 2024 – [Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2023-2024](#)
- **Various Guidance Documents** *(These are available electronically for information on the Intranet Portal and on the Council's website at [www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities) )*

#### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** – Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2023-2024