



C O U N C I L S U M M O N S

To all Members of Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

to be held at 2.00 pm on

23 September 2020

REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT MOBILE PHONES ARE SWITCHED TO
SILENT FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING**

--- A G E N D A ---

PART A

1. Mayor's Announcements
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Council (Civic Year 2020/21)
(Pages 3 - 6)
9th September 2020

PART B

4. Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - commended to Council for approval (Pages 7 - 66)
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer

enclosed.

5. Changes to Committee Memberships and Outside Body Representatives (Pages 67 - 70)
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer enclosed.

PART D

6. Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules
7. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Mayor pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Sh P.

Chief Executive

**Civic Centre
Port Talbot**

Thursday, 17 September 2020

COUNCIL

(Remotely via Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

9 September 2020

The Mayor: Councillor S.Jones

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor J.Warman

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, S.Bamsey, D.Cawsey, H.C.Clarke, C.Clement-Williams, M.Crowley, A.P.H.Davies, O.S.Davies, R.Davies, C.Edwards, J.Evans, S.E.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, W.F.Griffiths, J.Hale, S.Harris, M.Harvey, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, H.Jones, J.Jones, L.Jones, D.Keogh, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, D.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, A.McGrath, J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, R.Phillips, L.M.Purcell, S.Purse, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, D.Whitelock, C.Williams, A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

Officers in Attendance: S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, N.Pearce, K.Jones, C.Griffiths, A.Thomas, A.Thomas, C.Griffiths, N.Chappel, S.Curran, A.Manlipp, N.Headon, and J.Woodman-Ralph

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

It was with deep regret that the Mayor reminded members of the sudden death of Councillor Steffan ap Dafydd. In addition Council was advised of the death of the mother of Councillor Nicola-Jayne Davies.

As a mark of respect Council observed a minute's silence.

The Deputy Leader, followed by the Leaders of the Independent Group and Plaid Cymru paid their respects to the late Councillor Steffan ap Dafydd on behalf of their respective members.

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings of Council**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the following meetings of Council be confirmed as accurate records, subject to the venue for the meeting on 2 July 2020 being amended to 'Remotely via Microsoft Teams':

29 January 2020, 14 February 2020, 26 February 2020, 6 March 2020, 28 May 2020 and 2 July 2020.

3. **Licensing Act 2003 - Review of Licensing Policy**

RESOLVED: that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal Services to embark on a consultation exercise in respect of the proposed Licensing Act 2003 Policy and that a report be brought before Council in December 2020 for approval to adopt a Licensing Act 2003 policy, taking into account issues raised during the aforementioned consultation exercise.

4. **Urgent Items**

Because of the need to deal now with the matter contained in Minute Number 4 below, the Mayor agreed that this could be raised at today's meeting as an Urgent Item pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local government Act 1972.

Reason:

Due to the time element.

5. **Update on Covid 19**

The Chief Executive gave Council an update on the number of new cases of Covid 19 in neighbouring local authority areas. Concern was expressed that the rise in the numbers would result to more local

lockdowns and Members agreed that the messages in relation to social distancing should be reinforced.

Members were pleased to note that an information leaflet, developed in conjunction with the City and County of Swansea and the Local Health Board, would shortly be delivered to each household.

CHAIRPERSON

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

17 September 2020

Report of Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer K.Jones

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

Purpose of Report

1. To seek endorsement of the Cabinet to the draft Revised Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 prior to the Plan being considered for adoption by Council

Executive Summary

2. Under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 we, along with other public bodies, have a duty to develop Equality Objectives and produce a Strategic Equality Plan containing equality objectives and other information as required in the Regulations.
3. The Equality and Community Cohesion Group has been instrumental in the development of the equality objectives. The draft equality objectives have been developed using information gathered from a range of sources: feedback from internal engagement activities; local, national and regional research publications as well as relevant strategies and plans that are already in place or being developed.
4. The draft equality objectives and proposed actions were subject to public consultation and 46 responses were received.
5. The new Strategic Equality Plan, including the equality objectives and associated actions, was due to be presented to Cabinet in April but was delayed due to executive reporting arrangements being disrupted and the immediate response required by the Council to the global pandemic.

6. The events experienced since the end of March have necessitated the equality objectives and actions to be revisited and while the equality objectives remain relevant in light of recent events, it has become apparent that the actions require further review, which is already underway.
7. Consequently, the new Strategic Equality Plan, attached at Appendix 1, includes the equality objectives and other information as required under the regulations. The action plan to achieve the equality objectives is being redeveloped and will be presented to Cabinet for approval by the end of the calendar year.

Background

8. Under the Equality Act 2010 the Council is required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations amongst and between people of different protected groups; the Public Sector Equality Duty.
9. In Wales specific duties have been introduced under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to help public bodies carry out the public sector equality duty. Under these regulations we along with other public bodies have a duty to develop equality objectives and produce a Strategic Equality Plan containing the equality objectives and other information.
10. We have produced two Strategic Equality Plans since the introduction of the duty; in April 2012 and November 2015. The development and implementation of the latter plan had been brought forward six months to take into account the various topical issues of the time.
11. On 30 October 2019 Cabinet approved an extension to the current Strategic Equality Plan to April 2020 which will allow sufficient time to improve its alignment with our Corporate Plan, to better explore the requirements and impact of the soon to be introduced socio economic duty as well as to take on board the outcomes of various projects/initiatives such as the Poverty Symposium held in October 2019.
12. On 10 January 2020 Cabinet approved a period of public consultation on the draft equality objectives and proposed actions to take place between 16 January and 20 February. A total of 46 responses were received via the online survey. A consultation summary report can be found at Appendix 2.

Strategic Equality Plan and Recent Events

13. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 it has become increasingly apparent that while all communities have been affected, Black, Asian and minority communities have been affected disproportionately in matters of health, as key workers, with the severe effects on employment as well as in relation to accessible education for children and young people.
14. The brutal killing of George Floyd on 25th May 2020, along with other events in our recent history as well as the devastating impact the pandemic has had on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities has brought into sharp focus the deep seated attitudes and behaviours that remain towards people from these communities.
15. As a consequence it was recognised that the equality objectives and actions would need to be reviewed to ensure we fully address the impact of these events on our local communities.
16. Having reviewed the objectives, and taking into account recent evidence as reported to various government committees, the equality objectives were considered to be still relevant. Actions, however, fell short and alternative actions to better meet these objectives in the current circumstances will be developed with the involvement of our workforce and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.
17. The new Strategic Equality Plan, therefore includes the equality objectives along with other relevant information with actions included as an addendum to the Strategic Equality Plan later in the year.

Financial Appraisal

18. It is proposed that the equality objectives in the new Strategic Equality Plan will be met through actions already identified in existing strategies/plans or those due to be developed. The delivery of this work will be against an ongoing challenging financial backdrop.

Integrated Impact Assessment

19. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

An overview of the Integrated Impact Assessment has been included below in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 3, for the purposes of the meeting.

As a result of widespread changes in circumstances since March 2020 due to the global pandemic, the killing of George Floyd and the intensification of the Black Lives Matter movement it has been apparent that a refocus of our work was necessary. This being the case the equality objectives and actions were reviewed taking into account evidence of the impact the pandemic has had/continues to have on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and others who share protected characteristics. Although the equality objectives were deemed relevant the proposed actions did not adequately address the current situation.

Consequently the latter stages of the impact assessment has concentrated on the equality objectives including the subsequent conclusion.

The whole ethos of the Strategic Equality Plan and the equality objectives is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well to advance equality of opportunity between different groups. The equality objectives were developed with this in mind and as such will help address inequalities experienced by members of our various communities.

As a result of our continued work on improving the availability and quality of our services through Welsh there is potentially a positive impact in relation to opportunities to use the Welsh language.

There will be no adverse effect on biodiversity or Eco-system resilience

There will be a positive impact in relation to the Wellbeing of Future Generations as the equality objectives have been developed in line with the five ways of working.

Valleys Communities Impact:

20. The equality objectives will contribute to projects supporting the valley communities.

Workforce Impact

21. The equality objectives will be achieved against a backdrop of a reduced workforce alongside ongoing financial challenges

Legal Impact

22. These equality objectives along with the Strategic Equality Plan have been developed to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Risk Management

23. We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to develop equality objectives and publish these, alongside other information, in a Strategic Equality Plan. Failure to develop equality objectives could lead to a compliance notice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, an independent statutory agency which was established under the Equality Act 2006.

Crime and Disorder Impact

24. The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with “due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area”.
25. The equality objectives contain specific proposals to prevent and address hate crime and domestic abuse thereby assisting us in discharging the crime and disorder duty.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts

26. The Council has a legal duty under Section 2(1) of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 when exercising relevant functions to ‘have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which:
 - (a) increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
 - (b) exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.’
27. The equality objectives contain specific proposals to prevent and address domestic abuse thereby assisting us in discharging this duty.

Consultation

28. This item has been subject to external consultation. A period of public consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the Strategic Equality Plan between the 16 January and 20 February 2020.

Recommendations

29. It is recommended that Cabinet considers that new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 as attached at Appendix 1 and, if considered appropriate, that Cabinet commends the documents to Council for approval.
30. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Equalities be given delegated authority to make such changes as may be needed to the Strategic Equality Plan prior to publication, provided that such changes do not materially alter the content of the document considered by Council.

Reason for Proposed Decision

31. To meet the statutory requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Implementation of Decision

32. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in.

Appendices

33. Appendix 1 – Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
34. Appendix 2 – Consultation Summary Report
35. Appendix 3 – Integrated Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers

36. [Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019 Draft Annual Report 2018-2019](#)
37. [Equality Act 2010](#)
38. [Equality Act 2010 \(Statutory Duties\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)
39. Draft Equality Objectives and Actions – Background documents:
 - [Is Wales Fairer?](#) – Equality and Human Rights Commission
 - [Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy](#) (currently being revised)
 - [Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme - Action Plan](#)
 - Neath Port Talbot Poverty Symposium Report
 - Community Cohesion Survey
 - Stickability: Supportive Services for Gypsy and Traveller Communities in Neath and Port Talbot – research undertaken by Wales School for Social Care Research, Swansea University.
 - [Time to Change Wales Campaign Employer Pledge](#)

- [Smart and Connected - A Revised Digital Strategy](#)
- [Strategic Plan for Autistic Spectrum Disorder](#)
- Community Profile - NPT BME Community Association
- [Making Wales the best place in the world to grow older - Older People's Commissioner](#)
- Making Money Work (people's lived experience in Neath Port Talbot) – research undertaken by Toynbee Hall and Tai Tarian
- Council's Website Audit
- Community of Practice – feedback from initial event

Officer Contact

40. Mrs Karen Jones, Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer. Tel: 01639 763284 or e-mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymra
This document is also available in Welsh

www.npt.gov.uk

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If you require this information in larger print or in an alternative format, please contact the Corporate Policy Team on 01639 763010 or email: policy@npt.gov.uk

Introduction

The Strategic Equality Plan, including the equality objectives and associated actions, was to be presented to Cabinet in April 2020.

However, as a result of the outbreak of COVID -19 this was not possible due to executive reporting arrangements being disrupted and many of our workforce having been redeployed to other service areas to support the Council's response.

Furthermore, at the end of March 2020, the Equality and Humans Rights Commission suspended statutory deadlines for publishing Strategic Equality Plans and equality objectives until October 2020.

The response to the outbreak by key workers in all services across the public sector was, and continues to be, phenomenal. However, it became increasingly apparent as weeks went on that while all communities were being affected, Black, Asian and minority communities were being affected disproportionately; in matters of health, as key workers, with the severe effects on employment as well as accessible education for children and young people.

The various reports and meetings over recent months have not only supported original opinion but are exploring in depth the devastating impact the pandemic has had on our Black, Asian and minority communities. At an early stage in the outbreak we recognised that the Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives would need to be reviewed to address the impact the pandemic was having on our local communities.

The brutal killing of George Floyd on 25th May 2020, followed by the understandable international outcry and condemnation, other events in our recent history as well as the disproportionate effect COVID-19 outbreak experienced by members of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities brought into sharp focus the deep seated attitudes and behaviours that remain towards people from these communities.

In his address to Council in July 2020, the Leader gave a commitment to initiate a fresh look at how we work with our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in Neath Port Talbot to achieve equality, equity and social cohesion and to bring about societal change to demonstrate that Black Lives Matter.

This accentuated the need to further review the equality objectives, and actions. Following consideration of the most recent relevant papers and research available it was considered that while the equality objectives remained relevant further consideration of more relevant actions was required.

In light of this, an involvement programme is being developed to ensure that the experiences and concerns of members of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in the Neath Port Talbot are fully taken into account in the revision of actions to meet our equality objectives.

Who we are

Neath Port Talbot is located on the coast between Swansea to the west and Bridgend to the east. Neath Port Talbot also shares boundaries with Carmarthenshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Covering an area of over 44,217 hectares, the physical characteristics of the County Borough is broadly divided into the coastal corridor and the Valleys.

According to the Census 2011 Neath Port Talbot has a resident population of 139,800 and has the 11th highest population density of the 22 local authorities across Wales. The expected growth in population, an increase of about 5% (7,000) by 2021, appears to be borne out with the 2018 mid-year estimate of 142,906 people living in the county borough. This estimate includes nearly 31,500 people over the age of 65.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019 identified that 15.4% of local super output areas (areas with a population of 1000) in Neath Port Talbot are in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales. The WIMD is designed to identify those small areas where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation

According to the 2011 Census, black and minority ethnic groups account for 2.1% of the population compared to 4% in Wales.

Data from schools indicates that the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds (non-white British) is 6.16% compared to the all Wales percentage of 11.41%.

At the 2011 Census, of those people indicating a religion, faith or belief, 57.7% described themselves as Christian, 33.8% indicated that they have no religion, 7.3% did not state a religion and those remaining were Buddhist (0.2%), Hindu (0.1%), Jewish (0%), Muslim (0.4%), Sikh (0.1%), other (0.4%).

Neath Port Talbot has the third largest Gypsy and Traveller Community in Wales. There are two authorised gypsy traveller caravan sites in the county borough with an estimated population of 236.

At the time of the Census, 2011, over three quarters (77.7%) of adults living in Neath Port Talbot considered their health was either good or very good, which is very similar to the average across Wales. 10.5% of adults surveyed felt that their health was poor or very poor, which is a little higher than the average across Wales (7.6%).

There are high levels of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and respiratory disorders in the county borough with 28% of the population having a limiting long term illness compared to 22.7% across Wales (Census 2011).

The provision of unpaid care in Neath Port Talbot is 14.6% (Census 2011), the largest percentage in Wales.

Structure of the Council

Within Neath Port Talbot there are 42 electoral divisions returning 64 elected members and we operate a cabinet model of local government with a Leader who is supported by nine cabinet members (the Executive). Decision making is organised among the Cabinet and four Cabinet Boards. Scrutiny Committees monitor the performance and decisions of the Executive and make reports and recommendations which advise the Executive and the Council as a whole on its policies, budget and service delivery.

Each of our eight Cabinet Members have responsibility for a broad range of matters. The cabinet member for corporate services and equalities is our designated Equality Champion while the cabinet member for adult social services and health is our designated Older Persons' Champion. Further cabinet members have portfolios which are associated with the equalities agenda, for example, children, education and community safety.

The importance we give to equalities is reinforced by the fact that policies and plans relating to equalities and the Welsh language are amongst the limited number that require approval by full Council.

A senior management group consisting of the Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Directors oversees the strategic management of the Council's business. Heads of Service have individual operational responsibility for services as well as providing strategic support to senior management.

Our corporate Equality and Community Cohesion Group, with a membership consisting of senior officers of the Council, the police and representatives of local equality groups, organisations and communities, aims to:

- address issues and concerns that are identified by the various communities
- promote cohesiveness and provide mutual support for the communities in Neath Port Talbot
- keep under review key external equality-related developments, such as equality standards, codes of practice and legislation
- ensure Council policies are accessed by all
- raise the profile of equalities throughout Neath Port Talbot County Borough
- recommend corporate equality documents for approval
- monitor progress on the implementation of corporate equality policies and action plans within directorates
- share expertise and experience, in order to support other group members in the task of taking a lead in equalities

This group has been instrumental in the development of our equality objectives.

The Legislative and Strategic Context

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010, brought together and replaced previous anti-discrimination legislation, simplified and strengthened the law, removed inconsistencies and made it easier to understand for everyone. By implementing the Act our aim is to work towards creating a fairer society, improving public services, addressing entrenched inequalities and ultimately improving people's lives.

The Council, along with other public bodies, is required under the Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations amongst and between people of different protected groups (known as the Public Sector Equality Duty).

The protected groups, or characteristics, are:

- age
- gender reassignment
- sex
- race
- disability
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- religion and belief
- marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the need to eliminate discrimination)

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

In Wales, specific duties have been introduced to help us carry out the public sector duty and these include the production of a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and the development and publication of equality objectives.

Welsh Language Measure 2011

The Measure gave the Welsh language official status in Wales, established the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner, created a procedure for introducing duties in the form of language standards and made provision regarding promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language amongst other provisions. The Welsh Language Commissioner's role is to promote the Welsh language, and improve the opportunities people have to use it, by emphasising the language's official status in Wales, and by placing standards on organisations.

Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015

These Regulations, imposed on county councils and county borough councils, national park authorities and Welsh Ministers, include a range of standards of conduct in respect of the Welsh language. The standards were grouped into the following areas:

- service delivery
- policy making
- operational
- promotion
- record keeping

A [Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for 2019-2020](#) has been produced, in accordance with these Regulations, which details how we have complied with the standards during the year.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This legislation places duties upon the Council to set well-being objectives and to work in a sustainable way to achieve a fairer and more equal Wales. The Council has recently revised its integrated impact assessment tool to assist officers in weaving together all of the duties that arise in relation to equality.

Socio Economic Duty

The Welsh Government's proposed introduction of the socio economic duty will require us, along with other public bodies, to do more formally. We already consider the impact of policy decisions on socio economic grounds to an extent through our existing Integrated Impact Assessment tool. There is no doubt that inequalities are widening so it would make sense in that context for us to be really clear about where the main impacts of decisions we make are falling. Those who are poorest are being disproportionately affected by a number of changes and we are working with the Bevan Foundation and local partners to draw this out a lot more clearly prior to decisions being taken. The Socio Economic Duty will come into effect in Wales on 31 March 2021.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

The aim of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to outline the Council's plans for Welsh medium education in the county borough, moving primary and secondary schools along the linguistic continuum to provide a measured and considerable increase in the level of Welsh medium education.

NPT Armed Forces Covenant

We are very aware that veterans of the armed forces who, by the very nature of their service involvement, can experience poor mental health and/or physical disabilities. Their experiences not only affect the individual but also impact on family and friends, straining relationships, causing distress, sometimes leading to even more critical situations for all concerned. The strain on family life is not confined to families of veterans but can be experienced by families of those currently serving in the armed forces.

As part of our commitment to this work we have signed the UK Government's Armed Forces Covenant and encourage our strategic partners to do so too. Locally, we have signed an Armed Forces Community Covenant with the armed forces community in the county borough and our local strategic partners. Signatories to the Covenant agree to help support to the local armed forces community and make it easier for service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support available. In addition, the armed forces community is encouraged to do as much as it can to support its community and promote activity that integrates the service community into civilian life.

Digital Inclusion

Whilst the Council's Smart and Connected Digital Strategy aspires to exploit the potential of digital technologies for local people and our economy, the strategy explicitly recognises that there are significant number of people who are not on-line. In 2020 the Council was recognised by Digital Communities Wales for the work it is doing as an agency and in partnership to address digital exclusion. Many of those who are digitally excluded share protected characteristics. For example, those who are elderly, in poor health, disabled or on low incomes are more likely to be digitally excluded than others in the general population. We must ensure that as we innovate and harness digital technologies and data sciences to improve the effectiveness of our organisation that we do not leave people behind. Our action plan developed in support of the Digital Inclusion Charter commitments sets out how we will do this.

Assessment and training

Integrated impact assessment

We have reviewed and revised our equality impact assessment process to include our new legal duties introduced by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 as well as maintaining the focus of equalities and the Welsh language. Our aim was to develop a more integrated approach when assessing the impact of our policies and services not only on people who share protected characteristics but also on the wider community, both now and in the future.

With the introduction of the new Integrated Impact Assessment process we developed a training programme on to ensure our staff fully understand the why as well as the how to undertake assessments, the importance of consultation and involvement as well as recognising the wider sustainable development principle.

The Council's Executive and Non-Executive/Regulatory Report Guidance was also updated to reinforce current and reflect new legislative requirements. This update of the report guidance also provided an opportunity to reinforce the way in which impact assessments are reported to members.

A review of the impact assessment process and the success of its implementation was due to be undertaken in May 2020 but this has been delayed due to the pandemic. The review will be rescheduled as soon as is practicable.

Completed integrated impact assessments form part of decision reports and as such are published on our website as part of the reports pack for Cabinet or the relevant Cabinet Board. The intention of the Integrated Impact assessment is that members have a good understanding of how decisions proposed to be taken impact on people who share protected characteristics or other factors.

Training

Training is an important element of our work, not only in helping us meet our equality objectives but also as a key feature in the personal development of employees and elected members. As a result, our training programme has focused on areas that are new and those that remain challenging for the Council as a whole.

We continue to work to ensure that all staff and elected members are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are suitably trained when planning and delivering services. Over recent years we have had huge workforce changes as a result of austerity measure, e.g. loss of significant numbers of experienced staff and a moratorium on recruitment. With this and the ever changing dynamics within our communities as a result of inward migration and external forces, e.g. Brexit, we are conscious that gaps remain in our understanding and knowledge and so we continue to seek out appropriate training to address this.

A range of equalities related training has been delivered to our staff and staff from partner organisations. These sessions have included most recently mandatory training on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, dyslexia awareness, equalities in the workplace, hidden disabilities and making reasonable adjustments, unconscious bias, hate crime, modern slavery and human trafficking, ethical employment and welsh language amongst others. We have also held training for staff who have responsibility for undertaking integrated impact assessments.

Equality matters have also been included in other seemingly unrelated areas such as complaints officer and performance management and performance appraisal for managers training amongst others.

Our Equality Objectives

- Education** – to ensure children and young people are the best they can be
- Health and Wellbeing** – to promote wellbeing and good mental health and tackle mental health stigma and discrimination
- Employment** – to ensure our workforce is more reflective of our community, our policies are fair and equitable and gender pay gaps are reduced
- Participation** – to ensure services are accessible for all and people and communities are able to better influence decisions that affect them
- Living standards** – to work to reduce poverty and support independent living

Developing our equality objectives

With continuing austerity, increasing unease as a result of the national political and economic climate, the impact of various national policies combined with rising levels of poverty, hate incidents and the increasing awareness of mental health issues we have been acutely aware of the impact these have on our communities.

However, even against this backdrop we have made a lot of progress in developing our understanding of the issues and there are some good pieces of work being delivered which are having a positive impact for people within our communities:

- We started work on understanding what poverty issues are having the most significant impact on local people and held our first 'Poverty Symposium' event in September 2019. The event helped to identify opportunities for improving the way that services and support are delivered to people on low incomes across Neath Port Talbot.
- Universal Credit - its roll out is having a significant impact on those of our residents who may already be dealing with long term health problems, disability or unemployment and we have been working with our partners to provide help and advice to those adversely affected.
- We have commissioned Policy in Practice, who use household level data to understand and track the impact of the welfare reforms on residents, to help us determine who will be most significantly affected by the cumulative impact. The focus of our work going into 2020-2021 is to use the information to target the roll-out of the Childcare Offer and to direct some of our employability efforts towards specific groups of people.
- National Participation Charter - our Youth Service and The Think Family Partnership were the first in Wales to sign up to the National Participation Charter and have received the coveted National Participation

Kitemark for the way they encourage children and young people to have their say in the design and planning of the services they deliver.

- Youth Mayor – the young people of Neath Port Talbot elected their first ever Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor, who will be the voice for all children and young people across the county borough and will also shadow the Mayor of Neath Port Talbot at a number of pre-determined Civic duties.
- Safe Leave Policy - in continuing with the implementation of our 'Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy' we became the first local authority in Wales to implement a 'Safe Leave' policy for staff who are affected by any form of Domestic Abuse, allowing them the opportunity to access support services, legal advice, alternative housing or medical help in a safe, planned way.

In addition our wellbeing objectives and improvement priorities in the Corporate Plan reflect our commitment to address the issues we face in Neath Port Talbot. Our vision and values set the standard for our work:

- We want our county borough to be a place where everyone has an equal chance to get on in life – a place where people want to live, learn and work and bring up their family
- We will celebrate diversity in all of its forms and work tirelessly for greater equality in all of our communities.

This is further expressed by our commitment in this iteration of our Strategic Equality Plan:

'To reduce inequality and tackle the causes of inequality'

The Equality and Community Cohesion Group, consisting of senior officers of the Council, the police and representatives of local equality groups, organisations and communities has been instrumental in the development of the draft equality objectives and proposed actions.

In developing the equality objectives we considered various national and local research findings; latest data available to the Council and issues raised by local equality groups during meetings of the Equality and Community Cohesion Group.

Local research was carried out with members of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community, people with experiences of low income, disabled people, members of the Gypsy and Traveller community and communities in general. A number of common threads were identified throughout the process, including hate crime/incidents, poverty and barriers when accessing services, which have been incorporated into the equality objectives.

Evidence and data

The following are some of the key documents referred to in the development of the equality objectives:

Is Wales Fairer? - The Equality and Human Rights Commission's '[Is Wales Fairer?](#)' Report has been a key source of data to inform the development of the draft equality objectives. It is the most comprehensive review of how Wales is performing on equality and human rights. The Report focuses on six themes: Education, Health, Personal Safety, Living Standards, Employment and Participation and these appear to reflect those areas which have been highlighted locally. As a result we have adopted these themes for our draft equality objectives.

Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy - The revised Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities strategy outlines the priority areas and strategic direction around healthy relationships and the implementation of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 within Neath Port Talbot. Developed with a wide range of partners and survivors with the aim of tackling all forms of violence in relationships, the achievable actions will help us to achieve our long term vision:

*“To prevent and eradicate gender based violence by promoting: equality; safety; respect; and, independence to enable **everyone** to live free from abuse and the attitudes that perpetuate it.”*

Chwarae Teg Fair Play Employer Scheme - We are working with the Chwarae Teg as part of the [Fair Play Employer Scheme](#). The Scheme supports organisations to develop gender equality action plans, using analysis of available workforce data, consideration of employer practices, matched to evidenced best practice recommendations, including actions to reduce gender pay gaps. Chwarae Teg has assessed our gender equality policies and practices, including a survey of staff and awarded us the Silver Award for Gender Diversity. This award recognises that the Council has a clear commitment to making a difference to the recruitment, retention and progression of women in the workplace.

Neath Port Talbot Poverty Symposium - A multi-agency Poverty Symposium was held in September 2019 and brought together practitioners from a range of organisations, to identify opportunities for improving the way that services and support are delivered to people on low incomes across Neath Port Talbot. The event explored the causes of poverty, the impact of welfare reform, the day-to-day experiences of poverty in our communities, the increase in poverty in working households and the relationship between income and well-being.

The information from the Poverty Symposium is being used to inform the development of a multi-agency strategy to outline what needs to be done to improve the lives of those living on a low income in Neath Port Talbot.

Community Cohesion Survey - This survey, undertaken with residents of Neath Port Talbot during 2019, provided insight into the dynamics within our communities. It highlighted the complexities of people’s feelings and experiences particularly when accessing public sectors services, engaging with people from other backgrounds and as victims of hate incident/crime. It was also apparent that underlying issues of austerity and multiple deprivations contributed to negative views and positions.

Stickability: Supportive Services for Gypsy and Traveller Communities in Neath and Port Talbot - This community-based evaluation, conducted in early 2019, to explore the question ‘What could be different in how

Neath Port Talbot (NPT) local area services support local Gypsy and Traveller communities'? Commissioned by the Council and undertaken by Wales School for Social Care Research at Swansea University, the research sits in the context of a commitment to better understand and respond to the disadvantage and exclusion faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities. Interviews with both local community members and service providers have provided invaluable insight which is currently being considered to determine how best to address issues.

Community Profile - The aim of the community profile exercise was to understand the makeup of BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) Communities in Neath Port Talbot and any issues and challenges that they experience. The exercise involved analysing census data and data collected by Neath Port Talbot schools, as well as extensive work engaging with communities across the county borough. Various issues/concerns were raised during the exercise and these are being addressed through the work of the NPT BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Community Association as well as informing the Strategic Equality Plan.

Time to Change Wales Campaign Employer Pledge - Time to Change Wales is a national campaign to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. By committing to the [Time to Change Wales Campaign's Employer Pledge](#) the Council has publically declared that we as an organisation want to step up to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. The associated action plan provides a framework for us to support employees with their mental health as well as support for training and access to a range of resources.

Smart and Connected - A Revised Digital Strategy - Our [Smart and Connected Strategy](#) focuses on three strategic priorities: transforming the way we deliver our functions/services and increasing use of the Council's on-line functions/services by residents; contributing to the development of favourable conditions for economic growth in the county borough and embracing a "digital first" approach to the way we support our workforce.

A key element of the strategy is to reduce digital exclusion - something that impacts on people who share protected characteristics

Making Wales the best place in the world to grow older - This [strategy](#) sets out the Older Person's Commissioner's vision of older people in Wales and her priorities for 2019-2022. The Commissioner's vision of Wales as '...the best place in the world to grow older' is supported by three priorities: taking action to end ageism and age discrimination; stop the abuse of older people and enable everyone to age well.

Making Money Work - This research, undertaken by Toynbee Hall and Tai Tarian, provided an insight into people's lived experience of being on low income in Neath Port Talbot. The findings and suggested solutions have played a key role in the work being undertaken as part of the anti-poverty agenda, with participants continuing to be involved.

Council's Website Audit - We commissioned a disability audit of the top ten most frequently used web pages to identify how we can improve access to services for those residents who have disabilities. A report on the findings has since been received and work is being undertaken to address the issues identified.

Community of Practice - The first Community of Practice (CoP) on Involvement and Engagement event was held in September 2019. The Community of Practice was established not just to consult with but to involve our communities and partner agencies from the outset in the work that we do to help us shape proposals before wider public consultation exercises. The event gathered over 28 key partners with representatives of range of groups including, children and young people, carers, people with disabilities, Welsh speakers and partnerships.

Equalities in Employment - Our latest [Annual Equalities in Employment Report](#) provides information collected and published as part of our legal requirements under equality legislation. This annual snapshot, disaggregated by protected characteristics and by specified categories, provides an overview of our workforce.

Gender Pay Gap - In our latest [gender pay gap report](#) the difference between the average pay of the men and women who work in the Council was 3.93% as at March 2019. Although reduced from 4.21% (March 2018) we were committed to reducing this further and so joined Chwarae Teg's Fair Play Employer Scheme in February 2019, to support us in delivering gender equality in our workplaces and achieve all the benefits of a truly

balanced workforce. With Chwarae Teg's support we have developed a Gender Equality Action Plan, which includes specific actions to reduce the Council's Gender Pay Gap.

Welsh Language - Working to meet the requirements of the Welsh language standards is key to our work and while we do not always get it right we are committed to the principle of the Welsh Language Measure 2011. Providing a Welsh language service with a limited number of Welsh speakers is challenging. However, we are continually looking at ways to overcome this in order to provide a more effective and responsive service. Our [Welsh Language Standard Annual Report 2019-2020](#) provides additional information on how we are meeting the standards while progress for the period October 2018-September 2019 on the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy can be found in the [progress report](#).

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - This international agreement sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities. We continue to be mindful of the requirements of the Convention particularly when developing our policies and services. A child's basic right to be protected from violence and abuse, to receive an education that enables them to fulfil their potential and to express their opinions and be listened to have formed the basis of our work.

NPT Armed Forces Covenant – As part of our commitment to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#), our Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer (who works across Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Bridgend) has been key to the various initiatives and projects undertaken in the county borough and regionally; these included the Neath Port Talbot Mayor's Armed Forces Festival, armed forces awareness training, armed forces village and flag raising at the Wales Air Show.

As part of our Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy, we are working with representatives from local organisations who support victims of domestic violence and our armed forces community to better understand and support victims and perpetrators amongst families of a serving member of the armed forces or a veteran. We have recognised that women from Commonwealth countries who have married service personnel

may experience particular difficulties in their relationship and are working with BAWSO (an organisation that supports women of ethnic backgrounds who experience domestic abuse) to better understand the issues.

Improvements to our understanding of the impact and manifestation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder has been a feature in our training programme and as a consequence appropriate reasonable adjustments at our reception areas have been identified to improve accessibility.

Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan – our [Corporate Plan](#) sets out our vision and describes the kind of Council we want to become. To achieve our vision, we have set ourselves the following three ambitious well-being objectives:

- To improve the well-being of children and young people: *“All of our children and young people have the best start in life, so they can be the best they can be”*
- To improve the well-being of all adults who live in the county borough: *“Everyone participates fully in community life – socially and economically”*
- To develop the local economy and environment so that the well-being of people can be improved: *“The whole of Neath Port Talbot county borough will be a vibrant, healthy and safe place to live, work and enjoy recreational time”*

Monitoring and Review

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 requires the Council to publish an annual report of progress made in meeting its equality objectives. The first annual report on this new Strategic Equality Plan, will be for the period 2020-2021 with an anticipated publication date in Autumn 2021.

As our Corporate Plan contains actions and improvement priorities that complement those identified to meet the equality objectives, we will report on progress against these Plans simultaneously in order to provide a more holistic assessment of progress.

The annual report will be reported to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and once approved will be published on our website and communicated using a range of different media in line with our Corporate Communications and Community Relations Strategy. The annual report will be made available in alternative formats on request.

The corporate Equality and Community Cohesion Group, consisting of representatives of local equality groups, the police, officers and members of the Council, will be responsible for keeping the equality objectives and actions under review as well as monitoring progress.

We will develop appropriate performance indicators to measure the outcomes for each objective and these will be published along with actions to meet the objectives later in the year. Performance indicators will be kept under review to ensure that they are remain fit for purpose.

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Strategic Equality Plan

Draft Equality Objectives and Proposed Actions

Consultation Report

1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 place a duty on the Council to prepare and publish equality objectives to meet the general duty (including steps on how we will meet these objectives) and produce a Strategic Equality Plan (to include specific information).

Draft equality objectives and proposed actions were developed collaboratively with the equality and Community Cohesion Group whose members include representatives of local equality groups, elected members and senior officers.

In addition a Community of Practice on Involvement and Engagement comprising of officers who regularly engage with various groups within Neath Port Talbot, for example, carers, partnerships, children and young people, were involved in a 'light touch' workshop to gather initial thoughts prior to their, and their groups, more detailed involvement during the public consultation exercise.

A five week public consultation on the Council's draft equality objectives and potential actions was undertaken from 16 January to 20 February 2020.

Please note where quotes from respondents have been used these are original and unedited.

2. Changes due to COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter

The final draft of the Strategic Equality Plan, including the equality objectives and associated actions was to be presented to Cabinet at the end of April 2020.

However, as a result of the outbreak of COVID -19 this was not possible due to executive reporting arrangements being disrupted and many of our workforce having been redeployed to other service areas to support the Council's response.

The brutal killing of George Floyd on 25th May 2020 caused an international outcry and condemnation. This, along with other events in our recent history as well as the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 experienced by members of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

communities have clearly shown that there remains deep seated attitudes and behaviours towards people from these communities.

In light of this it was considered appropriate to further review the Strategic Equality Plan to ensure addressed concerns and experiences that perhaps were not fully aware realised.

In the current circumstances the draft equality objectives continue to be appropriate but further consideration of more relevant actions is now required.

Therefore to avoid confusion this consultation report will focus on comments received in relation to the draft equality objectives with a brief overview of the comments received in relation to the original proposed actions.

3. What we did

To help ensure that the consultation was as widely available as possible, there were a number of mechanisms by which people could submit their views. These included:

- a self-completion questionnaire published on the Council's web site
- consultation packs, including a hard copy of the questionnaire, in libraries and civic centres
- promotion via a press release
- promotion via the Council's corporate social media accounts messages
- Promotion via the Equality and Community Cohesion Group
- Promotion via Community of Practice on Innovation and Engagement

4. Consultation analysis

A total of 46 responses were received all via the online survey, with:

- 44 in English and 2 in Welsh
- The majority of responses (where indicated) came from Port and the surrounding area.
- A high majority of respondents agreed/strongly agreed with each of the equality objectives.

All views and comments expressed during the consultation were considered prior to the equality objectives being finalised.

4.1 Responses received in relation to the equality objectives

Education – to ensure children and young people are the best they can be

The majority of respondents (44, 95.65%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 1 respondent neither agreed nor disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed.

One of the areas focused on by respondents who supported the objective was the opportunity this would provide for the future of our children and young people both as individuals and members of society; ‘...live a happy and productive life’, ‘to achieve their potential’ and it will ‘contribute to a better future for the area’.

Respondents considered that equality of opportunity in education, that children and young people are influenced by behaviours shown to them as well as the recognition that academic achievements are not for everyone. ‘Equal opportunity and sufficient funding to cater for all abilities and talents; ‘children find it easy to conform to beliefs in them. If they are not believed in positively, it is easy to behave negatively’, ‘this focuses on the expectation that they are the best they CAN be. Rather than just the best - well worded’ respectively.

One respondent simply commented – ‘why wouldn’t you?’

The one respondent who neither agreed nor disagreed considered ‘pressure can be counter productive’.

Health and Wellbeing – to promote wellbeing and good mental health and tackle mental health stigma and discrimination

The majority of respondents (42, 91.30%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 3 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed.

A number of respondents commented that emotional wellbeing /mental health affects everyone and all aspects of life – relationships, work and physical health. It affects the individual and the ‘whole family’.

Providing support and tackling the stigma associated with mental health was also highlighted; for individuals, the community and in the work place.

This stigma was clearly expressed by one respondent ‘Many people who are affected by mental health issues will not talk about it for fear of stigma, but talking about it is one of the things that might help them deal with it’.

The Councils continuing commitment to the wellbeing of its workforce was reflected by the comment received from one respondent ‘the council dose (sic) always promote well being ... they were very supportive towards myself’.

Of the two respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed one commented on the length of the objective and other appeared to misinterpret the objective believing it would lead to a diagnosis of mental health issues for an individual.

Personal Safety – to ensure people and communities are safe, respected and free from violence and abuse

The majority of respondents (43, 93.47%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 2 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed.

Respondents who agreed/strongly agreed with the objectives commented on various aspects; from the fundamental principle ‘everyone deserves to feel safe’ to acknowledging the impact of this on the individual, community and economy of the area, ‘helping to build strong communities’; from the need of an understanding of rights, responsibilities and unacceptable behaviours to the knowing who to turn to in times of need and the ‘confidence that matters would be dealt with’

Of the two respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed one wished us luck and the other queried the meaning of ‘respected’.

Employment – to ensure our workforce is more reflective of our community, our policies are fair and equitable and gender pay gaps are reduced

The majority of respondents (38, 82.60%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 4 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed.

Comments received supported the principle of fair and equitable policies and that the workforce is reflective of our community: ‘everyone should receive the same salary for the same work’; ‘ensure opportunities exist for everyone regardless of age, gender, religion, etc.’; ‘we need to have a more diverse workforce so that we gain a fuller understanding of the issues that affect our community and can work with those areas much better’.

One respondent even commented that a ‘happy workforce will offer higher levels of productivity and loyalty’.

Another commented that ‘there are not just gender issues, there are also issues associated with disabilities.’

Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed two commented that suitability rather than any other reason is essential for a post. While one responded felt this objective was not as important as the others.

The comments from those who disagreed with the objective also focused appointment to posts based on suitability and skill rather than other considerations, such as gender etc., and ‘the composition of the local community, which would discriminate against people from outside Wales’.

Participation – to ensure services are accessible for all and people and communities are able to better influence decisions that affect them

The majority of respondents (41, 89.13%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 4 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed.

Respondents supported this objective from participation in decision making, ‘people ...feel more ownership...’ ‘believe their actions and decisions make a difference’ to supporting people to become more involved in communities, their own lives, etc, ‘support to make the best

choices for them and their communities. Everyone should have the same opportunities to help and improve themselves and their lives' 'providing people with a voice is essential if we are to meet their (sic) needs'

One respondent commented 'there should be equality of opportunity for everyone whatever your circumstances' and this was echoed by a number of others particularly in relation to digital exclusion 'digital services are increasing... (but) ...ensuring people can access services and information is essential'.

The support already provided to those unable to access services from the usual sources was also highlighted as was the view that greater accessibility to Welsh medium education and schools transport and GP and mental health services was required.

While agreeing with the objective some respondents did not consider that 'we have good enough education opportunity for young people with additional or behavioral needs' and that a greater focus on disabilities is required.

Comments by those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the objective focused on general participatory aspects rather than those equalities related

Living standards – to work to reduce poverty and support independent living

The majority of respondents (41, 89.13%) agreed/strongly agreed with this objective; 4 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed.

Respondents commented that 'no child in a modern society should be born or grow up in poverty' and that sufficient funding from government was necessary to tackle it.

Independence was important for a number of respondents who commented that helping 'people help themselves...(would)...promote self esteem and self confidence.' One respondent commented that 'many young people...have stated they don't have the necessary skills to live independently'.

Some general observations were also provided: 'every one deserves a good happy life; 'this is help raise the quality of life for everyone and 'feel that a large number of people in Neath Port Talbot do not work because they don't want to, rather than being unable'.

A respondent who neither agreed nor disagreed with the objective considered that living standards would 'improve if the other areas are improved and is not the main issue', while another observed that 'supporting independent living...must be economically viable'.

4.2 Responses received in relation to the proposed actions

The majority of respondents (an average of 75%) considered that the proposed actions would meet our draft objectives. Actions to meet the Participation equality objective attracted most support (80%) while Living Standards attracted the least (72%).

Comments predominantly reinforced the actions but where other views were expressed these were either unrelated to the actions, of a more general nature or the actions appeared to have been misconstrued

During the consultation period further potential actions were suggested by the Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer and from the Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning Directorate for inclusion under specific equality objectives.

Given the current circumstances it is not considered appropriate to continue with this process. However, we do recognise and appreciate the contribution of respondents and will take all comments into account when revisiting the development of actions later this year.

4.3 Impacts identified by respondents in relation to the equality objectives

The majority of respondents indicated that neither they nor their family would be impacted by the equality objectives generally.

Where respondents indicated to the contrary the majority considered impacts would be due to age: explanations focused on children and young people in relation to education; equal pay and age discrimination were also indicated.

Impacts in relation to disability, race and sex were also identified (although in lower numbers) with the following reasons being provided:

- I'm 18 and suffer from anxiety, I have not been able to get support, for day to day life and getting work
- As a non-Welsh person living and working in Wales, I already feel discriminated against by Welsh Government policy and practice
- Improvement in gender pay gap discrepancies

4.4 Additional comments provided

Of the few additional comments received the majority required no further action. However, one respondent considered the terminology Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, rather than Black Minority Ethnic, to be more appropriate and consequently this has been amended.

5. Changes made following consultation

Given the level of support for the equality objectives from respondents it was not considered necessary to make amendments.

Had circumstances remained unchanged some amendments to the proposed actions would have taken place. However, as circumstances have now overtaken the process the proposed actions are no longer considered relevant and will not be included in the Strategic Equality at this time.

6. Equalities Information

The council's standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey. A breakdown of the equalities information relating to the consultation respondents can be found in the table below.

Please note these questions are voluntary and as such not every respondent completed this section.

Age Range	Number
16-24	2
25-29	3
30-39	8
40-49	12
50-59	9
60-74	6
Prefer not to say	4
No response	2

Welsh Language	Number
Little or no knowledge	25
Learner	9
Fluent speaker and writer	2
Fairly fluent speaker	5
Fairly fluent speaker and writer	2
No response	3

Do you consider yourself to have a Disability?	Number
Yes	8
No	32
Prefer not to say	3
No response	3

Gender	Number
Male	8
Female	32
Prefer not to say	4
No response	2

Religion / Belief	Number
Christian	17
No religion	19
Any other religion	1
Prefer not to say	6
No response	3

Sexual Orientation	Number
Heterosexual	38
Lesbian	1
Bisexual	1
Prefer not to say	3
No response	3

Nationality	Number
Welsh	36
English	2
British	5
Prefer not to say	1
No response	2

Ethnic Origin	Number
White (British)	35
White (Other) - White Welsh	4
Mixed (White and Black Caribbean)	1
Mixed (White and Black African)	1
Mixed (White and Asian)	1
Prefer not to say	2
No response	2

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Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment considers the duties and requirements of the following legislation in order to inform and ensure effective decision making and compliance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Version Control

Version	Author	Job title	Date
Version 1	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Office - Equality and Welsh Language	17.12.19
Version 2	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Office - Equality and Welsh Language	03.03.20
Version 3	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Office - Equality and Welsh Language	25.08.20

1. Details of the initiative

	Title of the Initiative: Strategic Equality Plan – Equality Objectives
1a	Service Area: Corporate Policy Unit
1b	Directorate: Chief Executive’s Office
1c	<p>Summary of the initiative:</p> <p>The Strategic Equality Plan contains the Council’s Equality Objectives along with information on how the Council will address equality issues, promote equality amongst staff and the public as well as meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties 2011.</p> <p>The first stage in the production of the Strategic Equality Plan is the development of the objectives along with the identification of associated potential actions. With the implementation of the objectives our aim is to reduce and tackle the causes of inequality.</p>
1d	<p>Who will be directly affected by this initiative?</p> <p>Those who share protected characteristics of age, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion/belief.</p> <p>It is likely that carers and possibly women who are pregnant/on maternity may be affected indirectly.</p>

1e	<p>When and how were people consulted?</p> <p>Initial Development – an event was held with the Community of Practice for Engagement and Involvement to obtain an insight into what was important to the groups they regularly engage with. The feedback from this event, along with the themes from the ‘Is Wales Fairer?’ was to be considered by the various groups as part of a pilot with the Community of Practice, however no feedback was received.</p> <p>Based on both quantitative and qualitative evidence draft objectives were developed by the Equality and Community Cohesion Group.</p> <p>Public Consultation</p> <p>Public consultation on the Council’s draft equality objectives and potential actions was undertaken from 16 January to 20 February 2020.</p> <p>View could be submitted via a self-completion questionnaire published on the Council’s web site and via a consultation packs, including a hard copy of the questionnaire, in libraries and civic centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion via a press release • promotion via the Council’s corporate social media accounts messages • promotion and engagement via the Equality and Community Cohesion Group • promotion and engagement via Community of Practice on Innovation and Engagement
1f	<p>What were the outcomes of the consultation?</p> <p>Initial Development – the pilot engagement work with the Community of Practice unfortunately did not provide feedback to help shape the objectives. However, using evidence already available and pertinent to the local need, including data held but the Council, local and national initiatives, recent local research findings, national research as well as people’s lived experiences, it has been possible to draft equality objectives. However, these will be tested during the public consultation.</p> <p>Post Consultation</p> <p>A total of 46 responses were received all via the online survey, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44 in English and 2 in Welsh • The majority of responses (where indicated) came from Port Talbot and the surrounding area.

- A high majority of respondents agreed/strongly agreed with each of the equality objectives.

Given the level of support for the equality objectives from respondents it was not considered necessary to make amendments.

Had circumstances remained unchanged some amendments to the proposed actions would have taken place. However, as circumstances have now overtaken the process the proposed actions are no longer considered relevant and will not be included in the Strategic Equality at this time.

25.08.20

In response to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities along with the stark realities of injustices brought to the world's attention over recent months a review of the equality objectives and proposed actions have been undertaken.

Taking into account evidence and reports widely reported as well as the views of the local BME Community Association it is considered that the equality objectives remain relevant but actions to meet them in the current circumstances required further development.

2. Evidence

What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?

Data available from the Census 2011 - attached

Various local regional and national research documents; for example Community Profile - NPT BME Community Association; Community Cohesion Survey; Smart and Connected - A Revised Digital Strategy; 'Making Money Work (people's lived experience in Neath Port Talbot)' – research undertaken by Toynbee Hall and Tai Tarian; 'Is Wales Fairer?' – Equality and Human Rights Commission.

3. Equalities

a) How does the initiative impact on people who share a **protected characteristic**?

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age	✓			<p>It is anticipated that the impact will be positive on children and young adults, as well as older people.</p> <p>Children and Young People – working to improve educational attainment, non-attendance and exclusions as well as to address bullying in schools will ensure pupils will achieve their full potential. The challenges faced by many prior to school is a key factor to achievement. By working to meet the objectives we and, where appropriate, our partners will endeavour to reduce obstacles to learning as well as ensuring children and young people and their families are supported throughout their school life to have the best outcomes possible.</p> <p>Older people – our aging population is increasing and our work as an individual organisation and in partnership to support people remain independent for as long as possible is anticipated to have a positive impact. As a result of the implementation of actions under the various objectives positive impacts for older people are likely.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>The positive impacts in relation to children and young people were echoed by respondents; predominantly in relation to education.</p> <p>The matter of age discrimination was identified and although not explained it is assumed this is in relation to employment (as it was linked to equal pay).</p> <p>The aim of the equality objectives is to improve children and young people’s opportunities and outcomes. It is anticipated that the employment objective will address real and/or perceived discrimination through adherence to and development of relevant policies and practices.</p>
Disability	✓			<p>Working with partners to tackle hate incidents/crimes will help provide safer and more inclusive communities which will impact positively on those who have been subject to such victimisation due to their disability.</p>

			<p>By focusing on mental health within the workplace we will provide support for those who experience mental health and help remove the stigma associated with it.</p> <p>Access remains an issue for many but by working with groups to identify where improvements can be made, for example to our website and our committee rooms as well as in the digital arena we will be able to tackle and help reduce inaccessible services and communication.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>Respondents highlighted positive impacts on their or their families' lives. The objectives would provide opportunities for many. Actions to meet the objectives will be key to ensure that positive impacts are realised.</p>
Gender reassignment	✓		<p>It is anticipated that the objectives will impact positively on the trans community – by helping dispel negative attitudes through awareness raising, opportunities for greater participation and community cohesion.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>While some respondents identified there being positive impacts for this characteristic no details as to why were provided. The majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families.</p>
Marriage & civil partnership		✓	<p>Impacts on this group is unknown at this time but will be tested during consultation.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>While some respondents identified there being positive impacts for this characteristic no details as to why were provided. The majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity		✓	<p>Impact on this group is unknown at this time it but will be tested during consultation. However, it is possible that there will be positive indirect impacts as a result of our work to promote wellbeing and good mental health, to ensure our employment policies are fair and equitable and to reduce poverty.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>While some respondents identified there being positive impacts for this characteristic no details as to why were provided. The majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families.</p>

Race	✓		<p>It has been apparent from the various pieces of national and local research that members of the BME Community have encountered negative experiences from being victims of hate crime/incidents, to language barriers when accessing services. By addressing the personal safety and living standards objectives it is likely that the community will be impacted positively.</p> <p>In addition it is likely that the education and health and wellbeing objectives will have positive impacts for children and young people and their families while the employment objective will ensure we have policies and practices in place to encourage a workforce that better reflects our communities.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>Respondents highlighted positive impacts on their or their families' lives. While objectives would provide opportunities for many actions to meet the objectives will be key to ensure that positive impacts are realised.</p> <p>However, one respondent commented that 'As a non-Welsh person living and working in Wales, I already feel discriminated against by Welsh Government policy and practice'. It will be incumbent on the Strategic Equality Plan and the equality objectives to address such feelings to ensure opportunities are afforded to all regardless of their race or other characteristics and to ensure communities do not become divisive.</p>
Religion or belief	✓		<p>Working more closely with our faith communities we will be in a position to better understand issues faced as a result of their faith which will improve the support, advice and service we are able to provide.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>While some respondents identified there being positive impacts for this characteristic no details as to why were provided. The majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families</p>
Sex	✓		<p>The objectives aim to address the inequality experienced by many due to their sex. Our work in relation to gender pay will help alleviate and in time eradicate the imbalance between the genders as well as providing a foundation for future work in relation to unequal pay gaps.</p> <p>Although it is predominantly women who experience domestic abuse in NPT the number of male victims is increasing and it is recognised that there is limited support</p>

			<p>and advice available to them. This has been identified in the Healthy Relationships for Safer Communities Strategy that is currently being revised.</p> <p>The gap in educational attainment between boys and girls, at its most basic level, is continuing. By working with schools we aim to put in place support and practices to address as well as ensuring families are also supported.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>Respondents highlighted positive impacts on their or their families' lives; gender pay equality was cited by respondents (where identified) as the reason.</p> <p>While objectives would provide opportunities for many, actions to meet the objectives will be key to ensure that positive impacts are realised.</p> <p>However, the majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families.</p>
Sexual orientation	✓		<p>Our evidence indicates that the number of reports of hate crime/incidents for this particular group remains high, which appears to be supported by the responses received in the Community Cohesion Survey. It is anticipated that the implementation of the objectives will have a positive impact in helping reduce the numbers of instances.</p> <p>Post consultation</p> <p>While some respondents identified there being positive impacts for this characteristic no details as to why were provided. The majority of respondents considered there would be no impact for them or their families.</p>

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation is required to identify actual impact, particularly in relation to the protected characteristics of Marriage & Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity, and to explore potential mitigating actions for consideration

b) How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**?

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	✓			<p>The whole ethos of the Strategic Equality Plan is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well to advance equality of opportunity between different groups the implementation of the Plan will certainly progress this.</p> <p>Our commitment to engagement with different groups and communities in the development of the objectives has allowed greater understanding between groups, a shared sense of purpose, and a sense of increasing confidence to reduce inequality and tackle its causes.</p>
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	✓			
To foster good relations between different groups	✓			

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation is required to identify any actual impact and to explore potential mitigating actions for consideration

4. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	✓			Working with our various communities we will help provide support and assistance to those who experience isolation and exclusion due to language barriers, encourage community activities and events and help people participate via appropriate forms of engagement to ensure their voices are heard in the development of policies.
Social Exclusion	✓			<p>It would appear from available research, that the many facets of social exclusion are either a direct or indirect consequence of a small number of circumstances, for example access to public transport and digital services etc., low income or debt, isolation or limited opportunities.</p> <p>The various actions to meet the objectives go some way to help resolve these issues and provide opportunities for members of the various communities in Neath Port Talbot to take an active role (as far they may wish to) for their own benefit as well as for the community in which they live/associate with.</p>
Poverty	✓			<p>Addressing the causes and consequences of poverty will be a key feature of our work over the next few years especially based on the feedback from the Poverty Symposium and the various research projects undertaken locally and nationally. Over recent years we have become increasingly aware of the various aspects of poverty within our area and have identified work streams to address some of these; our work to address adverse childhood experiences is one such work stream.</p> <p>The development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy will provide a structured approach for our work and identify areas where greatest impacts can be made for those most in need.</p> <p>The soon to be introduced socio economic duty will provide further impetus for this work and we will ensure we are able to meet its requirements.</p>

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation is required to identify any actual impact and to explore potential mitigating actions for consideration

5. Welsh

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?
What effect does the initiative have on: – people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language			✓	Opportunities to use Welsh will continue for all ages and linguistic abilities. We will continue to raise awareness of the language along with cultural and historic awareness as an employer as well as to support other organisations/third sector groups to also do so. As a service provider we will continue to and work on improving the availability and quality of our services through Welsh. Opportunities for staff will continue to be promoted so that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English Language.
– treating the Welsh and English languages equally			✓	We will continue to treat Welsh no less favourably than English as required by the Welsh language standards.

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation is required to identify any actual impact and to explore potential mitigating actions for consideration

6. Biodiversity

How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Biodiversity Duty**?

Biodiversity Duty	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity			✓	It is likely there will be no change as a result of this proposal
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.			✓	It is likely there will be no change as a result of this proposal

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Consultation is required to identify any actual impact and to explore potential mitigating actions for consideration

7. Well-being of Future Generations

How have the five ways of working been applied in the development of the initiative?

Ways of Working	Details
i. Long term – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	<p>Initial Development - Although the timescales for the Equality Objectives are relatively short, 4 years, they have been developed in line with the following long-term Wellbeing Gola goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more equal Wales • A Wales of cohesive communities • A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.
ii. Prevention – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	<p>Initial Development - It is anticipated that by working towards these objectives we will reduce and tackle the causes of inequality. The various plans and strategies linked to the objectives will further enhance this work</p>
iii. Collaboration – working with other services internal or external	<p>Initial Development - The Equality and Community Cohesion Group, with a membership of council officers and representatives from a range of local equality groups has overseen and been actively involved in the development of the objectives. Various plans and strategies that are being/have been developed to meet both the Council’s individual responsibilities as well as those in partnership with others bodies informed their development.</p>
iv. Involvement – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the population	<p>Initial Development - A range of varied sources have been used to inform the development of the objectives including life experiences of specific communities, the Equality and Community Cohesion Group, with a membership of council officers and representatives from a range of local equality groups. While greater involvement of people who share protected characteristics was planned these opportunities were not taken up in the initial stages. However, involvement/engagement will continue and any feedback will be taken into account prior to the objectives being finalised.</p>
v. Integration – making connections to maximise contribution to:	<p>Initial Development - The equality objectives as developed will help meet the Council’s Wellbeing objectives and complement the priorities in the Council’s Corporate Plan</p>
Council’s well-being objectives	<p>Initial Development Well-being Objective 1 - To improve the well-being of children and young people Well-being Objective 2 - To improve the well-being of all adults who live in the county borough</p>

	Well-being Objective 3 - To develop the local economy and environment so that the well-being of people can be improved
Other public bodies objectives	<p>Initial Development</p> <p>Objective 1: Support children in their early years, especially children at risk of adverse childhood experiences</p> <p>Objective 2: Create safe, confident and resilient communities, focusing on vulnerable people</p> <p>Objective 3: Put more life into our later years - Ageing Well</p> <p>Objective 4: Promote well-being through work and in the workplace</p> <p>Objective 6: Tackle digital exclusion</p>

8. Monitoring Arrangements

Provide information on the monitoring arrangements to:

Monitor the impact of the initiative on Equalities, Community Cohesion, the Welsh Measure, Biodiversity Duty and the Wellbeing Objectives.

25.08.20

The corporate Equality and Community Cohesion Group will be responsible for keeping the equality objectives under review as well as monitoring progress.

In light of changes in circumstances actions and measure will be developed and kept under review to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

As required by legislation progress on the equality objectives will be reported in an annual report.

9. Assessment Conclusions

Please provide details of the conclusions reached in relation to each element of the assessment:

	Conclusion
Equalities	There is a positive impact with the equality objectives contributing to our work to address inequality and tackle the causes of inequality experienced by particular groups within our society. Engagement with different groups and communities in the development of the objectives has allowed greater understanding between groups and fostered a shared sense of purpose.
Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty	The equality objectives will have a positive effect on the many facets that contribute to people's experiences of poverty and social exclusion and will potentially result in stronger communities, greater community involvement and participation thereby ensuring their voices are heard.
Welsh	As a result of our continued work on improving the availability and quality of our services through Welsh there is potentially a positive impact in relation to opportunities to use the Welsh language.
Biodiversity	There will be no adverse effect on biodiversity or Eco-system resilience
Well-being of Future Generations	There will be a positive impact as the equality objectives have been developed in line with the five ways of working

Overall Conclusion

Please indicate the conclusion reached:

- **Continue** - as planned as no problems and all opportunities have been maximised
- **Make adjustments** - as potential problems/missed opportunities/negative impacts have been identified along with mitigating actions
- **Justification** - for continuing with the initiative even though there is a potential for negative impacts or missed opportunities
- **STOP** - redraft the initiative as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified

Please provide details of the overall conclusion reached in relation to the initiative

As a result of widespread changes in circumstances since March 2020 due to the global pandemic, the killing of George Floyd and the intensification of the Black Lives Matter movement it has been apparent that a refocus of our work was necessary. This being the case the equality objectives and actions were reviewed taking into account new evidence of the impact the pandemic has had/continues to have on Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and others who share protected characteristics. Although the equality objectives were deemed relevant the proposed actions did not adequately address the current situation.

Consequently the latter stages of the impact assessment has concentrated on the equality objectives including the subsequent conclusion.

The whole ethos of the Strategic Equality Plan and the equality objectives is to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well to advance equality of opportunity between different groups. The equality objectives were developed with this in mind and as such will help address inequalities experienced by members of our various communities.

As a result of our continued work on improving the availability and quality of our services through Welsh there is potentially a positive impact in relation to opportunities to use the Welsh language.

There will be no adverse effect on biodiversity or Eco-system resilience

There will be a positive impact in relation to the Wellbeing of Future Generations as the equality objectives have been developed in line with the five ways of working.

10. Actions

What actions are required in relation to obtaining further data/information, to reduce or remove negative impacts or improve positive impacts?

Action	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Undertaken a public Consultation exercise to test the impact of the objectives on those who share protected characteristics.	Rhian Headon	February 2020	Feedback received
Consider responses and amend objectives where appropriate	Rhian Headon/Equality and Community Cohesion Group	March 2020	Consultation Report and any proposed amendments reported to and agreed for presenting to Cabinet Scrutiny /Cabinet by the Equality and Community Cohesion Group
Draft Strategic Equality Plan	Rhian Headon	February/March/ April 2020	Draft Plan including any revisions agreed for presenting to Cabinet Scrutiny /Cabinet by the Equality and Community Cohesion Group
Revision of equality objectives and actions in light of the impact of the global pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement	Rhian Headon/Equality and Community Cohesion Group	August 2020	Further revised equality objectives /actions included in the Strategic Equality Plan for presenting to Cabinet Scrutiny /Cabinet by the Equality and Community Cohesion Group.

11. Sign off

	Name	Position	Date
Completed by	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Office - Equality and Welsh Language	25.08.20
Signed off by	Karen Jones	Head of Service/Director	25.8.20

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT**

**COUNCIL
23rd September 2020**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHIEF
DIGITAL OFFICER**

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

CHANGES TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Purpose of the Report

Following the recent sad death of Councillor ap Dafydd the following changes to committee memberships and outside bodies have been requested.

1. Changes to Committee Memberships

Council is asked to agree to the following appointments to the vacancies arising as a result of the death of Cllr. ap Dafydd:

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - Councillor D.Keogh

Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee – Councillor R.Wood

Streetscene and Engineering Scrutiny Committee – Councillor C.Jones

Audit Committee – Councillor R.Taylor

Democratic Services Committee – Councillor A.J.Taylor

Corporate Parenting Panel – Councillor O.Davies

Schools Standards Partnership Group – Councillor M.Protheroe and
Councillor O.Davies (sub)

2. **Changes to Outside Bodies**

Welsh Books Council – Councillor R.Mizen

Tata Steel Joint Consultative Group – Councillor R.Mizen

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts.

Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality impacts.

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts.

Legal Powers

Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/contents>

Risk Management

There are none.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

That Council approves the above proposals.

Reason for Proposed Decision

To update the Council's membership arrangements.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is for immediate implementation.

List of Background Papers

The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Officer Contact

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