

SOUTH WEST WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee

3rd September 2024

Report of the Chief Executive

Report Title: Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Regional Strategic Equality Plan

<p>Purpose of Report</p>	<p>For Information To provide Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) with an update on the development of the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy that will inform the Regional Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) ahead of seeking approval via the SWWCJC.</p>
<p>Recommendation(s)</p>	<p>That Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) endorse the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (Appendix A) for approval, to enable the development of Regional Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) ahead of seeking approval from SWWCJC.</p>
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1. Introduction / Background:

- 1.1 Further to correspondence received from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Chief Executive has met Rev Ruth Coombs Head of Wales on behalf of the Commission.
- 1.2 The Corporate Plan encompasses the commitment towards the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), together with the Equality Objective **“To deliver a more equal South West Wales by 2035 by contributing towards:**



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(a) The achievement of the Welsh Government's long-term equality aim of eliminating inequality caused by poverty;

(b) The achievement of the Equality statement set out in Llwybr Newydd which is to make our transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport,

And

(c) The achievement of the Welsh Government's long-term equality aims of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal and where everyone is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. There will be no room for racism and / or discrimination of any kind.”,

1.3 Whilst the Commission appreciated the commitment of SWWCJC's Corporate plan, they noted the SWWCJC were yet to publish their Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 Regulation 14. Strategic Equality Plan and Reg 7. Arrangements for collection etc. of information about compliance with the general duty

1.4 During the meeting held on 16th May 2024, the Chief Executive provided an overview of the progress made SWWCJC has made and recognised within the findings published by Audit Wales. The Chief Executive further advised that the partners of SWWCJC had robust policies and procedures in place to include Strategic Equality Plans, together with the integrated impact assessment toolkit adopted by the SWWCJC to form strategic decisions.

2. Equality and Human Rights Commissioner :

2.1 Rev Ruth Coombs was positive that the SWWCJC are working towards the planned approach in a timely manner. Further advice and guidance was offered via officers together with publications available on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/public-sector-equality-duty-specific-duties-wales>.

3. Development :

3.1 The Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy has been developed to outline the commitment of the SWWCJC towards equality, diversity and inclusion. The strategy outlines several objectives and actions that will inform and enable the Regional Strategic Equality Plan.



3.2 Officers will continue to liaise with the Commission to gain feedback of the approach to implement the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and to inform the Regional Strategic Equality Plan in collaboration with partners to the SWWCJC.

3.3 The Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Regional Strategic Equality Plan will be presented to the SWWCJC to seek approval.

4. **Timescales:**

4.1 Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (Update) (Information) be presented to SWWCJC 30th July 2024

4.2 Liaise with the Equality and Human Rights Commission on draft strategy by 30th July 2024

4.3 Present the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to the Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee (3rd September 2024) for comment and endorsement.

4.4 Present the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (12th September 2024) seeking endorsement to implement and publish, enabling the development of the Regional Strategic Equality Plan.

5. **Financial Impacts:**

5.1 Engagement and participation development may require consultancy to ensure media planforms, stakeholder engagement planning and events. This will be considered in future reports if deemed necessary.

6. **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

6.1 The CJC is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In recognition of the above duties, the CJC has adopted an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Tool which allows for a two-stage approach to be undertaken to measure any potential impact of its decisions.

Following the consultation undertaken during January 2024 on the proposed actions to deliver the well-being objectives, the findings were incorporated within an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)(Appendix B) and the Corporate Plan updated and approved as version 002. Whilst the actions were subject to Amendment, the well-being objectives remain unchanged. The Corporate Plan and the associated IIA is interfaced with the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

The Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will inform the Regional Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). The existing integrated impact assessment (IIA) accompanying the Corporate Plan is considered suitable and sufficient to enable the implementation of the proposed actions in accordance with published guidance. This will enable the development of the Regional Strategic Equality Plan, engagement undertaken by partners of the SWWCJC will also be utilised.

The CJC approved its Corporate Plan 2023-2028 in March 2023. The Corporate Plan includes the CJC's Equality Objective which is set out below for ease of reference:

“To deliver a more equal South West Wales by 2035 by contributing towards:

- The achievement of the [Welsh Government's long-term equality aim](#) of eliminating inequality caused by poverty;
- The achievement of the [Equality statement set out in Llwybr Newydd](#) which is to make our transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport,
 And
- [The achievement of the Welsh Government's long-term equality aims](#) of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal and where everyone is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. There will be no room for racism and / or discrimination of any kind.”

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Alignment with CJC Corporate Plan 2023-2028 and the identified CJC Well-being objectives:

- 6.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.
- 6.3 The CJC approved its Corporate Plan 2023-2028 in March 2023. The Corporate Plan contains the CJC’s well-being objectives and frames the corporate direction of travel. To this end, it is considered that the recommendation(s) contained within this report align(s) to the corporate policy framework of the CJC as set out within its Corporate Plan.

Well-being Objective 1

“To collaboratively deliver the Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Regional Energy Strategy thereby improving the decarbonised economic well-being of South West Wales for our future generations.”

Well-Being Objective 2

“To produce a Regional Transport Plan for South West Wales that is founded on collaboration and enables the delivery of a transport system which is good for our current and future generations of people and communities, good for our environment and good for our economy and places (rural and urban).”

Well-Being Objective 3

“To produce a sound, deliverable, co-ordinated and locally distinctive Strategic Development Plan for South West Wales which is founded on stakeholder engagement and collaboration and which clearly sets out the scale and location of future growth for our future generations.”

The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) (Appendix B) associated with the Corporate Plan has been utilised to inform the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

As part of the development of the Regional Strategic Equality Plan, the Integrated Impact assessment will be reviewed to incorporate the IIA applicable to each constituent authority in relation to their Strategic Equality Plan.



7. Workforce Impacts:

7.1 There are no workforce impacts associated with this report

8. Legal Impacts:

8.1 To meet the duty placed on the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales (SWWCJC).

9. Risk Management Impacts:

9.1 To meet the legislative requirements of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee, whilst discharging the duties

10. Consultation:

10.1 The development of this report and associated appendices have been informed by the consultation undertaken to review the Corporate Plan, together with published guidance obtained from <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/>

As part of the development of the Regional Strategic Equality Plan, the Integrated Impact assessment will be reviewed to incorporate the IIA applicable to each constituent authority in relation to their Strategic Equality Plan (SEP).

11. Reasons for Proposed Decision:

11.1 To meet the duty placed on the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales (SWWCJC).

11.2 That Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) endorse the Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (Appendix A) for approval, to enable the development of Regional Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) ahead of seeking approval from SWWCJC.

12. Implementation of Decision:

12.1 Following the three day call in period.

13. Appendices:

13.1 Appendix A – Joint Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

13.2 Appendix B – Corporate Plan version 002 – Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

14. List of Background Papers:

- 14.1 [Agenda for South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee on Tuesday, 30th July, 2024, 2.00 pm: NPT CBC](#)



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