

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Policy and Resources Cabinet Board  
15<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

**Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services  
K.Jones**

## **Matter for Monitoring**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

## **Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2015-2016**

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report for 2015-2016.

### **Executive Summary**

2. Work on revising the Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives, which commenced in 2014-2015, culminated in Council approving the revised plan and objectives in October 2015.
3. This annual report for 2015-2016, attached at Appendix 1, is the first annual report on that revised Strategic Equality Plan and provides an assessment of progress against our 8 equality objectives during the year.
4. Overall, we achieved most of what we set out to do during 2015-2016 in relation to our 8 equality objectives. We made good progress in a number of areas but recognise there is still some work to be done.
5. While performance measures were identified as part of the revision of the Plan these have not proved as effective as we had anticipated and work is ongoing to develop more robust metrics for future reporting.
6. The main highlights of the year include:

- Our website has been redesigned with the new look website now having full functionality and is now accessible all mobile devices without losing the overall look of the website.
- We launched our Digital by Choice Strategy to improve access to the services we provide by extending the number of services we provide online.
- We met three of the seven areas of improvement, with work ongoing to meet the remaining four, which were identified in the Equality Impact Assessment Audit undertaken in October 2015.
- The new residential care home Plas Bryn Rhosyn at the old Caewern site was completed and occupied
- We completed a number of important physical regeneration projects across the county borough where the local equality group involvement has been instrumental to the outcome.
- Continued improvements in pupil attendance.

## **Background**

7. The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 requires us to provide an annual report by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year. In this instance it means reporting on 2015-2016 by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
8. The annual report includes the progress made towards fulfilling our equality objectives and how we have met the public sector general duty.
9. The focus for 2015-2016 has been the continuing review of the equality objectives. We have been conscious of ongoing financial challenges, reduced capacity, greater expectations and changing demographic in Neath Port Talbot. However, we have continued to work to meet the equality objectives while bearing in mind the revision of and the potential changes to the objectives.
10. The equality objectives were developed through active engagement with equality groups, elected members and officers, as well as being subject to a period of public consultation. As a result of this consultation a number of comments and suggestions were made and where appropriate were incorporated into the action plan.

11. Once again we have concentrated our efforts on improving areas which have greatest impact on people lives including the accessibility of our website and improving the equality impact assessment process. We have not, however, neglected other objective areas.
12. Our equality objectives and Corporate Improvement Priorities have been aligned to ensure a more holistic approach. This has ensured that progress made is complementary to both; the work on improving digital inclusion across the County Borough helps meet both our equality objectives and our wider improvement priority.
13. The Annual Report reflects this progress.

### **Financial Appraisal**

14. The progress described in the annual report was delivered within reduced budgets.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

15. The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to “pay due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.”
16. As the focus of the annual report is to report progress made against our equality objectives as well as to include other specified information there is no requirement to undertake an equality impact assessment.

### **Workforce Impact**

17. The progress described in the annual report was achieved against a backdrop of a reduced workforce alongside ongoing financial challenges

## **Legal Impact**

18. We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce and publish an annual report every year.

## **Crime and Disorder Impact**

19. 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”.
20. The Strategic Equality Plan contained specific proposals to prevent and address hate crime and domestic abuse and progress has been made to meet these proposals thereby assisting us in discharging the crime and disorder duty.

## **Risk Management**

21. We have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce and publish an annual report every year. Failure to produce an annual report 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.

## **Consultation**

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

## **Recommendations**

23. It is recommended that:

Members monitor the contents of the Annual Report 2015-2016 attached at Appendix 1.

## **Appendix**

24. Appendix 1 – Draft Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2015-2016

## List of Background Papers

25. [Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019](#)

## Officer Contact

26. Mrs Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services. Tel: 01639 763284 or e-mail: [k.jones3@npt.gov.uk](mailto:k.jones3@npt.gov.uk)