

Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Housing and Public Protection



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1 August 2019

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NOTICE OF INTENDED PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

The Portfolio Holder has received the following report for a decision to be taken under delegated authority. The decision will be taken on **7 August 2019** (i.e. 3 clear days after the date of this note). The decision will be published on the Council's website but will not be implemented until 5 clear days after the date of publication of the decision) to comply with the call-in process set out in Rule 7.36 of the Constitution.

1.	STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2016-2020
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Powys County Council

Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020

This document is our 2019-20 update of the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) published in April 2016. You can download the SEP at www.powys.gov.uk/equalities

This publication is also available in other formats. If you need this information in another format or Language, please get in touch.

Contents

Introduction	4
Public sector equality duties (PSED)	5
The process: How we set our objectives	6
Our equality objectives	7
Objective 1: Close attainment gaps in education	7
Objective 2: Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment	9
Objective 3: Improve living conditions in cohesive communities.....	10
Objective 4: Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation.....	12
Objective 5: Improve access to mental health services to people experiencing poor mental health	13
Objective 6: Prevent abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care	14
Objective 7: Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community.....	15
Protected characteristics matrix.....	17
Monitoring and informing of progress	18
How this plan links to the Council's vision, values and priorities	18
Accessibility.....	20
Impact assessments	20
Employment.....	21
Why a Gender Pay Objective?	22
How to get in touch	223



Foreword

This plan sets out our equality objectives and action plans for making Powys a fairer place to live, where people can achieve their potential, thrive and prosper.

It focuses on three things: improving our services, making our organisation a better place to work, and improving the most important life outcomes for local people.

We deliver a range of services to a diverse community with different needs, some of which experience significant disadvantage, and all this is taking place over a wide geographic area, which presents extra challenges. However, we will work to meet people's needs as best we can within the services and employment that we provide and contribute to helping those who experience disadvantage in life.

We believe this plan will assist in helping those who experience disadvantage, contributing to the social, economic and emotional well-being of our workforce and local communities. It will help improve staff morale, motivation and retention – meaning our services will be delivered more efficiently, and with more attention to detail - making things better for everyone.

The plan highlights how we are contributing to the aims of the Vision 2025: Our Corporate Improvement Plan 18-23 which sets out our vision for 2025 and the priorities for getting us there.

We hope that you are inspired by what we want to achieve, and understand that the well-being of those who live and work within our communities and our current and future staff, matter to us. We recognise that this defines what we are and what we will become.

We welcome your feedback on our Strategic Equality Plan. Our contact details can be found at the end of this document.

Dr Caroline Turner Chief Executive

Cllr James Evans Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Corporate Governance, Housing and Public Protection



Introduction

What is the Strategic Equality Plan?

In this plan we outline how we will promote equality and diversity for the next four years, some of the practical steps we will be taking to put our commitments into practice, the importance of data and how we will monitor our performance and the effectiveness of this Strategic Plan.

What is its aim?

The ultimate aim of the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) is “to improve our services and employment practices to meet the different needs of our citizens and employees and contribute towards improving the life outcomes for those who experience disadvantage”.

The plan is for everyone who lives, works, and visits or has an interest in Powys.

What are the objectives?

The ‘Is Wales Fairer?’ report identified seven key challenges that need to be addressed in Wales over the next 5 years to help improve equality and human rights. We have agreed the same seven equality objectives for the council, and planned how we will achieve them.

- Objective 1: Close attainment gaps in education
- Objective 2: Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment
- Objective 3: Improve living conditions in cohesive communities
- Objective 4: Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation
- Objective 5: Improve access to mental health services to people experiencing poor mental health. Note: Joint Objective and actions with Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB). All under Hearts and Mind Delivery plan
- Objective 6: Prevent abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care
- Objective 7: Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community

The detail on how these actions will be achieved are contained within the authority’s plans and vision 2025 programmes.



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Measures to see how well we are doing against tackling the issues of inequality feature underneath each objective and its actions. This will help us to evaluate how well we are doing.

Public sector equality duties (PSED)

This plan enables us to meet our legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

The General Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a new general duty on public sector organisations to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Equality improvement work should therefore hold the three elements of the General Duty in balance.

The Specific Public Sector Equality Duties for Wales

The Specific Duties underpin the General Duty, and specify what public bodies must do. The Specific Duties for public bodies in Wales are as follows:

- Setting equality objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan
- Engaging with people in relation to the protected characteristics
- Collecting and publishing information relevant to compliance with the General Duty
- Carrying out equality impact assessments and publishing the results
- Annual publishing of employment monitoring information
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the General Duty amongst staff and providing training
- Setting a gender pay equality objective where a gender pay difference is identified
- Establishing relevant conditions to meet the general duty in procurement processes



To read the legislation in full please go to:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

For a useful guidance document explaining the regulations in an easy to understand format, please go to:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty>

The process: How we set our objectives

Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the development work that has taken place since then has helped inform this plan, alongside the 'Is Wales fairer?' report published by the Equality and Human Rights commission in December 2015 and our joint collaboration engagement work that was conducted in the second half of 2015.

We carefully considered the evidence and agreed seven key objectives. We consider these to be the most pertinent issues facing the council at this point in time and they provide the focus for this plan. We will review these objectives annually.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment / Well-being and Population assessments

The objectives in this plan were informed by the outcomes of the JSNA undertaken in 2015. Our objectives have been reviewed annually to ensure they take account of the most recent data available. In 2017 the council and its partners published a Well-being and Population assessments as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. These replaced the JSNA enabling us to look more closely at local needs and issues effecting peoples well-being in relation to equality. As a result our actions and measures have been strengthened.

Is Wales Fairer?

We used the 'Is Wales Fairer?' report as a foundation to develop our plan. This report, produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, identifies the key equality and human rights challenges for Wales.



It brings together evidence to answer the question as to whether Wales is fairer today than it was when they first published their review five years ago. It looked at all of the important areas of life such as health, education, work, justice and individuals' role in society and the changes that have taken place in each of these.

'Is Wales fairer?' can be found on the Equality and Human Rights commission website or on our own website as follows

www.powys.gov.uk/equalities

Engagement

Key organisations operating within Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys worked collaboratively to deliver a joint engagement exercise. A mixed methods approach was used to gain the views and experiences of stakeholders across Dyfed Powys. One master survey was produced and local stakeholder events held in each of the four regions. This approach increased the robustness of our data and allows us to compare across regions.

This multiagency consultation report and Powys engagement report can both be found on our website at www.powys.gov.uk/equalities

Our equality objectives

Objective 1: Close attainment gaps in education

Why is this important?

The priorities in Challenge 1 are to close the attainment gap by raising standards of children receiving free school meals, children with special educational needs, looked after children, Gypsy Traveller children, reduce exclusions from school and reduce bullying.

What you told us

The engagement exercise gave us very specific and detailed information in relation to each protected characteristic and each domain. Disabled, Older, Transgender, Lesbian Gay and Bisexual (LGB) and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people are considered to have the worst education experiences. BME and LGB people reported significantly worse experiences of education than what other respondents thought they would have. Comments highlighted issues with prejudice and access.



We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:

We will

- a. Embed the Person Centred Planning approach to ensure pupils with special educational needs have appropriate targets for improvement
- b. Monitor the performance of the vulnerable groups, identifying any underperformance against benchmarked information and signpost to good practice
- c. Review support for children and young people with emotional, social and mental health issues

How will we know if we are successful?

- The percentage of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator, attaining the Core Stage Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 2, attaining the CSI at Key Stage 3 and attaining Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4
- The percentage of pupils at school action, school action plus or with a statement attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator, attaining the CSI at Key Stage 2, attaining the CSI at Key Stage 3 and attaining Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4
- The percentage of pupils of ethnic minority attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator (three year cumulative total), attaining the CSI at Key Stage 2 (three year cumulative total), attaining the CSI at Key Stage 3 (three year cumulative total) and attaining Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4 (three year cumulative total)
- The percentage of LAC pupils attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator, attaining the CSI at Key Stage 2, attaining the CSI at Key Stage 3 and attaining Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4
- Percentage of 15 year-olds leaving full time education without a recognised qualification and percentage of 15 year-old pupils in Local Authority care leaving full time education without a recognised qualification
- Number of pupils permanently excluded per 1,000 pupils (aged 5+) in primary and secondary schools
- Fixed term exclusions: percentage of days lost for primary (aged 5+) and secondary schools

How will we do it?

a to c will be met through the Schools Service Improvement Plan

Following year three's evaluation the following actions and their supporting measure have been removed:

- d. Support schools in ensuring that Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children (LAC) are of good quality, ensuring effective use of the LAC Pupil Deprivation Grant
- e. Continue to deliver KIVa a research-based anti-bullying program in Powys



Following the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection, Children's Services have revised their improvement plan to respond to each of the findings made by CIW. A significant amount of improvement work is taking place across the service. The strategic equalities objectives have also been reviewed and new ones set to fit with current Children's Services priorities and work programme.

Objective 2: Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in employment

Why is this important?

The priorities in Challenge 2 are to increase the employment rates of young people, disabled people, ethnic minority people and Muslim people and close pay gaps focussing on young people, ethnic minority people and women.

What you told us

The results from our engagement exercise show a number of groups may have poorer employment experiences – with disabled, older, and those pregnant or with small children faring the worst. Only men and single people are thought to have experiences no better or worse than the population as a whole. Considering self-reported results, BME, disabled, LGB, younger people, women and transgender people all have worse experiences than the experience other people perceive them to have.

We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:

We will

- a. Help people with a Learning Disability to have improved opportunities for valued occupation including paid employment
- b. Produce an annual pay policy ratified by full council, which will be transparent in respect to pay grades and pay ratios
- c. Review our recruitment process improving equality
- d. We will review and consider the 2017/18 Gender Pay Gap figures and produce an action plan to assist in reducing the gap
- e. Develop in house apprenticeships for care leavers within new Children's Services structure

How will we know if we are successful?

- a. Increase the number of users in paid employment above 16 hrs or more by 5%
- b. An annual pay policy will be ratified by full council and published in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 on the Council's website by 31st March for the upcoming financial year



- c.i Track the number of applicants that have declared they are eligible under the Equalities Act 2010 (updated 2016) 1. Appointed
- c.ii Track the number of applicants that have declared they are eligible under the Equalities Act 2010 (updated 2016) 2. Interviewed but not appointed
- d. Mean and median gender pay gap figure
- e. Apprenticeship Participation post within the Childrens Structure has been successfully recruited to

How will we do it?

- a will be met through the Adult Services Improvement Plan
- b to d will be met through the Workforce & Organisational Development Service Improvement Plan
- e will be met through the Children Services Improvement Plan

Following year three's evaluation the following action and its supporting measure have been removed:

- b. Provide workplace traineeships for Looked after Children and Care Leavers

Following the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection, Children's Services have revised their improvement plan to respond to each of the findings made by CIW. A significant amount of improvement work is taking place across the service. The strategic equalities objectives have also been reviewed and new ones set to fit with current Children's Services priorities and work programme.

Objective 3: Improve living conditions in cohesive communities

Why is this important?

The priorities in Challenge 3 are to reduce poverty especially amongst children, disabled people, and ethnic minority people. Improve access to care for older people and children and reduce homelessness, especially amongst people fleeing domestic abuse and people with poor mental health or learning disabilities.

What you told us

There is a perception that BME people and those who are pregnant (or with young children) have better housing experiences. Younger and single people are considered to have the worst experiences. When considering self-reported experiences, those for disabled and LGB people are significantly worse, suggesting poor experiences for housing for these two groups.



Getting along together in the community: BME, disabled, transgender and LGB people are all thought to have worse experiences. This is also true of the self-reported results for these groups. Key themes included: unwillingness to mix and fear of difference, access issues and communication difficulties arising from language (including competence in English and Welsh, and British Sign Language).

We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:

We will

- a. Deliver additional pitches for gypsy and traveller families in accordance with the findings from the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment
- b. Work at a local level to break down barriers to inclusion and integration for particular groups and communities
- c. Supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and host communities during the integration process.

How will we know if we are successful?

- a. Completion of additional site in Machynlleth by March 2021
- b. Measuring delivery outcomes detailed in the National Cohesion Plan under objective 2
- c. Measuring delivery outcomes detailed in the National Cohesion Plan under objective 3

How will we do it?

a will be delivered through the work of the Housing's Service

b and c will be progressed through the Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2019-20

Following year three's evaluation the following actions and their supporting measure have been removed:

- d. Continue to deliver flying start
- e. Proactively provide support for children with additional needs so that they can access mainstream early years and childcare provision.
- f. Implement Night Stop within the local authority

Following the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection, Children's Services have revised their improvement plan to respond to each of the findings made by CIW. A significant amount of improvement work is taking place across the service. The strategic equalities objectives have also been reviewed and new ones set to fit with current Children's Services priorities and work programme.



Objective 4: Increase access to justice and encourage democratic participation

Why is this important?

The key priorities in Challenge 4 are to ensure equal and effective access to civil justice for everyone and improve political and civil participation and increase diversity in public life.

What you told us

Younger, disabled, transgender and BME people are thought to have worse experiences of influencing decisions. Considering self-reported experiences, the position for disabled, LBG, and transgender people, is worse than the way others perceive their experiences to be.

We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:

We will

- a. Organise a Member Development session which enables the Young People's Forum to engage with Members
- b. Raise awareness of the opportunity for members of the public to contribute in council meetings
- c. As part of our Pathway Planning Children's Services will ensure that all 18 year old care leavers are supported to be registered to vote

How will we know if we are successful?

- a. Member Development session delivered with Members and Young Peoples Forum
- b. Number of questions asked by members of the public

How will we do it?

a and c will be met through the Children Services Improvement Plan
b will be met through the work of Legal and Democratic services

Following year three's evaluation the following actions and their supporting measure have been removed:

- b. Pilot and promote key scrutiny meetings via webcasting



Due to the financial implications, only Council and Cabinet meetings will be webcast.

Objective 5: Improve access to mental health services to people experiencing poor mental health

Why is this important?

The priorities in Challenge 5 are to improve access to mental health services and reduce the rate of suicide especially amongst men.

What you told us

Older people were considered to have worse experiences regarding access to care and support with pregnant women or those with young children having better experiences. The self-reported results showed variance in some cases, with worse experiences reported by disabled, LGB and transgender people. Carers were more likely to think disabled and older people had worse experiences.

We reaffirm that this is a priority in our plan and no changes have been made to our plan for its delivery.

We will

We will work with PTHB and other key partners to implement the Powys Hearts and Minds Delivery Plan which aims to promote mental and emotional health and wellbeing for all and to enable the provision of truly integrated care services for those who need them, thus making a positive difference in their lives and the lives of carers. We will:

- a. Work with PTHB to enact new duties from implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act
- b. Work together with PTHB and the third sector to implement safeguarding legislation and policies
- d. Working with PTHB, collaboratively with the third sector and the National Mental Health Service User and Carer Forum to ensure that the views and experiences of service users are at the heart of work to improve staff values, skills and attitudes and ensure that people are treated with dignity and respect.
- f. Put into place integrated assessment and care management systems based on clinical need (Older people's mental health services)
- h. Working with PTHB and Third Sector, ensure that care and treatment planning takes into account consideration of financial matters and ensures appropriate referral(s) to support are made Implement Supporting People Programme Guidance ensuring that commissioning decisions take account of mental health needs
- i. Work with PTHB and the third sector to ensure all their services embed a culture of dignity and respect

How will we know if we are successful?



Progress will be monitored and reported to the Mental Health Planning and Development Partnership which is governed by under the Regional Partnership Board.

- a. Number of resources highlighting mental health e.g. Literature, online information and central resources of information providing advice, guidance and signposting
- b. Ongoing national audits, inquiries and reviews. Annual report to Chief Nursing Officer/Nurse Director for Wales on Fundamentals of Care
- c. Service user satisfaction surveys
- d. Monitoring of action taken by Local Health Boards and Local Authorities in relation to Health Inspectorate Wales homicide reports
- e. Care and Treatment Plans identify finance, where appropriate
- f. Regional commissioning plans submitted by regional co-ordinating authorities
- g. Percentage of NHS and council workforce trained. Service User Surveys
- h. Staff surveys on organisational climate, employee engagement and wellbeing

How will we do it?

We will progress all actions and measures through the Powys Hearts and Minds delivery Plan.

Objective 6: Prevent abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care

Why is this important?

The priorities in Challenge 6 are to prevent the abuse, neglect and ill-treatment of children and older people in hospitals and care homes and protect human rights of people held in detention.

What you told us

Older people were considered to have worse experiences regarding access to care and support with pregnant women or those with young children having better experiences. The self-reported results showed variance in some cases, with much worse experiences reported by disabled, LGB and transgender people. Carers were more likely to think disabled and older people had worse experiences.

Older, transgender and disabled people are the groups considered to have the worst health experiences. LGB people self-report worse experiences than public perceptions. Significantly, respondents with caring responsibilities thought both disabled and older people had worse experiences than the overall results suggested.

We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:



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We will

- a. Embed efficient and effective safeguarding processes to support people in need
- b. Arrange representatives of the Children Looked After Forum and Care Leavers Forum to sit on the Corporate Parenting Group.

How will we know if we are successful?

- a. The Percentage of adult safeguarding enquiries completed within statutory timescales
- b. Percentage of Corporate Parenting Group meetings which had Young person representative in attendance

How will we do it?

- a will be met through the Adult Services Improvement Plan
 b will be met through the Children Services Improvement Plan

Objective 7: Eliminate violence, abuse and harassment in the community**Why is this important?**

The priority of Challenge 7 is to eliminate the incidence of violence, abuse and harassment particularly against women, disabled people, ethnic minority people, Muslim people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

What you told us

Regarding crime and access to justice a number of the protected characteristics are thought to have worse experiences than others, in particular, younger, BME and transgender people. In terms of self-reported experiences, the results for BME, disabled, LGB and transgender people are all worse than the way others perceive their experiences.

We reaffirm that this remains a priority in our plan. The following changes have been made to the actions and measures supporting this objective:

We will

- a. Tackle discrimination, hostility, tensions and extremism
- b. Strengthened front door arrangements with improved multi-agency working to enable early identification of domestic abuse and other key risk factors



- c. Identify and implement a Domestic Abuse risk tool to be adopted in line with the regional strategy
- d. Redesign of the referral and assessment document in line with Signs of Safety and to capture key risk factors such as domestic abuse
- e. Establish posts within the restructure which will ensure risk is more effectively managed including in relation to child sex exploitation (CSE)
- f. Multi Agency training across the service, council and partners

How will we know if we are successful?

- a. Measuring delivery outcomes detailed in the National Cohesion Plan under objective 4
- b. Multi Agency child sex exploitation training delivered across partners

How will we do it?

a will be met through Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2019-20

b to E will be met through the work of the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

Following year three's evaluation, the following action and its supporting measures have been replaced:

- a. Adoption of a delivery plan for the Local VAWDASV strategy on a regional basis by September 18

Following the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection, Children's Services have revised their improvement plan to respond to each of the findings made by CIW. A significant amount of improvement work is taking place across the service. The strategic equalities objectives have also been reviewed and new ones set to fit with current Children's Services priorities and work programme.



Protected characteristics matrix

The matrix below illustrates how each objective will contribute to each of the protected characteristics. This provides an important overview of how effective the spread of planned improvement is across the protected characteristics.

Objective	Race	Disability	Religion & Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Sex	Gender Reassignment	Sexual Orientation	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Age
1.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
2.		✓			✓				✓
3.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.		✓		✓	✓				
6.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Page 19



Monitoring and informing of progress

The monitoring of progress is a vital part of this plan, to ensure that we deliver on what we said we are going to do and keeping people informed. The current governance structure will continue with a progress report taken twice yearly to Cabinet and Executive Management Team. We will monitor how we are doing against our objectives, actions and measures according to the authority's performance management quality assurance framework. This will ensure all objectives, actions and measures are being progressed, challenged and monitored. We will publish a monitoring update report annually on our website.

How this plan links to the Council's vision, values and principles

How we do things is just as important as what we do. That is why we have adopted five key values and based our guiding principles on the Well-being of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Powys 2025 - Our vision for the future

We have clear priorities to deliver our vision:

- **The Economy** - We will develop a vibrant economy
- **Health and Care** - We will lead the way in providing effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment
- **Learning and Skills** - We will strengthen learning and skills
- **Residents and Communities** - We will support our residents and communities

To successfully deliver our priorities and deliver improved outcomes for our residents, we have a programme of work dedicated to improving our internal services and processes:

- **Making it happen**
Engagement and communication
Leadership and governance
Changing how we work



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Values

We are determined to create public services of the future that are driven by the right culture and behaviours. We will make sure our values are integral to the way we manage and recruit our staff, and guide all aspects of the way we work.

We will be:

- **Professional:** Whatever role we play in the council, we act with professionalism and integrity
- **Positive:** We take a positive attitude in all we do
- **Progressive:** We take a proactive and responsible approach to planning for the future
- **Open:** We keep each other informed, share knowledge and act with honesty and integrity
- **Collaborative:** We work constructively and willingly on joint initiatives

Guiding principles

The council's guiding principles are based on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 meaning the decisions we make now, must take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Powys in the future. The Act identifies the following five sustainable development principles to help ensure we do this:

- **Long-term**

Balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs

- **Prevention**

Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse

- **Integration (cross-cutting)**

Considering how our priorities may impact upon one another, on the well-being goals and on the priorities of other public bodies

- **Collaboration**

Working together with other partners to deliver our priorities

- **Involvement (communications and engagement)**

Involving those with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area

Other key principles

- **Gathering data and sharing information**

It is important that the plans we make are based on sound evidence. To determine where inequality exists over time, we need to make arrangements to continually gather relevant equality information and data for analysis. This means services need to ensure systems are in place to capture, analyse and share appropriate data and decide how best to use that information to design and deliver services to meet users' needs. We will continue collecting workforce data to embed equality-related evidence into our employment policies and practices. The wellbeing of our future generations needs to be considered in the design of our services. To enable this our data must look at trends over time along with information from our service users to understand future requirements. This will enable us to plan for future scenarios to meet the needs of our service users in the future.

- **Staff awareness and training**

It is important that all our staff and elected members are aware of the general and specific duties of the Equalities Act and its impact on their work, considering equalities when setting strategic direction and policy, reviewing performance and ensuring good governance. In order to achieve this we need to communicate our equality objectives throughout the organisation and ensure that learning and development resources are targeted towards enabling individuals to fulfil their roles. Learning and development opportunities are available to all with equality and diversity being a core part of corporate learning and development and e-learning.

Accessibility

We are committed to making our services including our websites and applications accessible to all, removing barriers (where reasonable) and giving due regard to all groups when making decisions.

Please let us know about any problems you have experienced or are currently experiencing. Our contact details can be found at the end of this plan.

If you would like a publication in an alternative format or larger font please contact the author or customer services.

To address web accessibility and the challenge of digital inclusion Powys County Council website has been developed where possible to best practice coding conventions corresponding with guidelines stipulated by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) and is xhtml 1.0 compliant.



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You can change the text size on our webpage to make it either larger or smaller by using your web browser's built-in text-size function. You can also change the font styles and foreground / background colours. If you'd like to read more about web accessibility please go to:

<https://customer.powys.gov.uk/accessibility>

Impact assessments

Impact assessments are a process of assessing how our services and policies impact upon different types of people. The aim of an assessment is to better understand the needs of people who want to access our services.

As a council we are subject to a number of pieces of legislation which require us to carefully consider how we make decisions, one of these is the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. We have incorporated equalities, Welsh language, Well Being of Future Generations Act, sustainable development principles, communication and engagement, safeguarding, unpaid carers, community cohesion and risk management into one, integrated impact assessment, supporting effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

Assessments should be conducted on:

- New policies that are being developed
- Changes to existing policies that will affect the way a service is delivered to people (directly or indirectly)
- Changes to an existing service that will affect the way a service is delivered
- Proposals to withdraw a service, or part of a service
- Change objectives
- Budget savings (this could be part of proposals to withdraw a service, or part of a service)

Employment

To ensure that we are treating people fairly and fulfilling the requirements of the General Duty in our employment practices, we will conduct equalities monitoring and analysis of staff, and those who apply for positions. We will publish an employment information report at the end of each financial year based on the figures as of the 31 March which can be found on our website: www.powys.gov.uk/equalities



Why a Gender Pay Objective?

The council has undergone a process of Job Evaluation, whereby the roles that people perform have been compared to ensure that people are paid fairly and equally. Furthermore, work around single status and the council's adoption of the principles of the Living Wage have contributed to addressing the issue.

However robust research and statistics across Wales, the UK and Europe shows, that overall women are paid less than men, and less favourably than a number of other European countries. The underlying reasons for this are often quite complex and not necessarily addressed through processes such as Job Evaluation which do promote like-for-like pay but do not address other issues such as part time and flexible working. To address this the Welsh regulations require all public sector bodies to set a gender pay objective, or to reasonably justify why one has not been set.

It is still not clear whether gender inequality is generated by the way employment is provided by the council. National research shows that it is the lowest paid types of work that can generate gender inequality in pay over-time.

In 2018 we reported a mean gender pay gap of 9.8% (average) and a median (middle) gender pay gap of 9.5 %.

The council believes in creating a diverse and gender balanced workforce which reflects the residents and communities we serve. We believe in job opportunities for everybody regardless of gender, and will challenge ourselves to be more inclusive as a public organisation. We want to create a truly inclusive culture and will be honest about the issues we and others face in our day to day work.

We are committed to a rigorous assessment and competency-based approach that ensures all appointments and internal promotions are made solely on the basis of merit, and are demonstrated against objective and non-discriminatory criteria.

There is still much work to do and our 2018 report highlights the degree of challenge that we face, however the council is fully committed to closing the gender pay gap and as a result has produced an action plan.



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