

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE → COUNTY COUNCIL

14 February 2023 → 23 February 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor James Gibson-Watt,
Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for an Open
and Transparent Council

REPORT TITLE: Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan (2023-2027)

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Council's new **Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan: Stronger, Fairer, Greener (2023-2027)** for consideration, and to seek Council's endorsement for its adoption and publication.
- 1.2 The Council's Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan (available in Appendix A) sets out our new well-being objectives and the actions we need to take to deliver them.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan is presented to Council for the first time in support of the new ambition: **To build a stronger, fairer, greener Powys.** It introduces the three corporate objectives that are its core aim:
 - We will improve people's awareness of services, and how to access them, so that they can make informed choices.
 - We will provide good quality, sustainable, employment and training opportunities, whilst pursuing real living wage employer accreditation.
 - We will work to tackle poverty and inequality to support the well-being of the people of Powys.
- 2.2 The Plan was developed using the priorities in the Progressive Partnership for Powys, which were presented by Cabinet in May 2022 following the Local Government Elections. Since then, Cabinet has collaborated with councillors and colleagues from across the Council to determine the new corporate direction for 2023-2027. A public consultation took place throughout December 2022, and feedback from all consultation activities (both internal and external) was considered.
- 2.3 The publication of this plan in April 2023, will ensure we meet our statutory obligations set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These require the Council to implement well-being objectives in accordance with the 5 Ways of Working as well as to show how we will maximise our contribution to the 7 Well-Being Goals, as well as ensuring that the Council meets its statutory obligations under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Equality Act 2010 (including the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties for Wales).

- 2.4 Services throughout the Council have developed their Integrated Business Plans (IBPs) for 2023-2027 in conjunction with the new corporate objectives and actions, as detailed within the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan. The IBPs set out the detailed actions that will be taken, and the resources required, to achieve each objective.
- 2.5 Once the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan commences, there may be a need for performance measures detailed within the Plan to be amended, as further work will need to be undertaken to refine how we monitor delivery against the Plan.

3. Advice

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan (provided in Appendix A) is approved for publication and is implemented and reported upon from 01 April 2023.
- 3.2 It is required that the Plan, once approved, is reviewed annually to ensure that the objectives and supporting activities are still the most relevant for delivering improved outcomes for Powys people and communities, as well as ensuring the plan remains realistic and achievable within the challenging financial climate.
- 3.3 It is advised that the Council continues to integrate its Strategic Equality Objectives into the Corporate Plan, to ensure that equality is integral to how we plan and act and provides the basis for delivering the ambition.
- 3.4 The Plan has been aligned to the Powys Public Service Board Well-being Plan and the Regional Partnership Board Area Plan to ensure that partners are working towards shared outcomes for the people of Powys.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The development of the Integrated Business Plans for each service requires that the financial and workforce requirements for the delivery of each activity are identified and considered, ensuring that resources are allocated to deliver the objectives of the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan.
- 4.2 The Section 151 Officer can support the recommendations on this basis.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view.
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

6. Comment from local member(s)

6.1 N/A – this proposal relates to the whole county.

7. Integrated Impact Assessment

7.1 An Impact Assessment of the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan 2023-2024 has been undertaken and is attached. However, each service is required to undertake an Impact Assessment of the individual activities within the Plan when developing their Integrated Business Plan.

8. Recommendation

8.1 **It is recommended that the proposed Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan (as outlined in Appendix B) is approved for publication, with implementation from 01 April 2023 considering the recommendations provided in Appendix A, based upon engagement and scrutiny activity.**

8.2 The recommendation above will ensure:

- The Council has a clear Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan, and that activities are focused on delivering the objectives.
- That the Council meets its statutory obligations as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the 2010 Equality Act and, more specifically, the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

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Appendix A – Engagement and Scrutiny Recommendations

Summary of recommendations from engagement activity

Following engagement activity during the Winter, a summary of the responses has been provided within the attached document pack. Responses from this survey have been analysed and the below recommendations have been identified:

ID	Recommendation	Response
R1	Strengthening the work being undertaking to support the Welsh Language, drawing links to workstreams such as the Welsh Language Strategy	Accept – additional detail added to Welsh Language section within equalities section
R2	Ensure that access to arts and cultural assets are included more prominently within objective 1, “We will improve people’s awareness of services, and how to access them, so that they can make informed choices”	Reject – Whilst arts and culture are important areas in supporting the people of Powys, the detail of accessing specific arts and cultural assets would be contained within Service areas Integrated Business Plan.
R3	To further demonstrate the links between job creation and economic development within the Plan, and further strengthening objective 2, “We will provide good quality, sustainable employment, and training opportunities, whilst pursuing real living wage employer accreditation” to reflect this	Accept – additional wording added to Objective 2 to strengthen this area.
R4	Many respondents did not understand the roles and responsibilities of the Council and its wider Partnership plans, provide a section within the plan detailing the most prominent partnerships, include the Public Service Board, Regional Partnership Board and Corporate Joint Committee	Reject – links to various Partnership plans such as the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Board are contained within the “What other plans and strategies do we have in place to support these objectives?” section of the Plan.

Summary of recommendations from Scrutiny Committees

At the time of writing, the Corporate Plan has been presented before Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee and Economy, Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee. They have provided the following recommendations:

ID	Recommendation	Response
R5	The role of partnership working and how this plan fits within the wider Partnership planning landscape is incorporate within the document for clarity	Reject – links to various Partnership plans such as the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Board are contained within the “What other plans and strategies do we have in place to support these objectives?” section of the Plan.
R6	Objective 1 is strengthened in content to reflect its ambition of co-production and more information is provided around how communities can be supported to get involved and be engaged with	Reject – this is already included within objective 1
R7	Objective 3 is strengthened in content to reflect further around the role and aspirations of developing community enterprises	Accept – additional wording added to Objective 3 to strengthen this area.
R8	To consider if the target of 350 Council houses is ambitious enough or appropriate due to the number of people awaiting council housing	Partially reject – Housing Services believe the target to be appropriate; but additional detail has been added to the Plan to reflect that this is both new-build properties and purchasing properties.
R9	To further reflect upon the rural nature of Powys within the Corporate Plan	Accept – linkages to rural cost analysis have been identified and embedded within Plan