

Joint Scrutiny Committee: 28 February 2024

Report Title:	Corporate Strategic and Equality Plan Scorecard: Quarter 3 Performance
Lead Officer:	Catherine James, Head of Transformation and Democratic Services

Key Issues in the report highlighted by Lead Officer

1. It should be acknowledged that the measures within the CSEP are under continuous review and improvement. The measures do not yet all include reporting from all services, as mechanisms are still under development to support this aspiration. For example, CSEP measure 1 reports the '*Number of contacts to Powys County Council (Number of times people have contacted the Council)*', but at present it only includes data from Economy and Digital and Housing Services. This does not enable detailed information on service level contacts so the figures should not be taken at face value. This will be addressed in next year's CSEP, which will expand the reporting to include further services and will separate the measure into each contributing service to enable greater understanding of how and when people are contacting the Council.
2. As in previous quarters of the current performance year, it is requested that the committee's attention is drawn to the objective 2 action that states 'By March 2026, we will establish a fair pay commission that will set out how the Council will become a fully accredited living wage employer. We will do this in consultation with trade unions and our partners'. The Council already pays a Real Living Wage to all the staff it directly employs. The aspiration to seek accreditation is contingent on the Council's contractors paying their staff a Real Living Wage, and work will be undertaken to gain insight into the current wage arrangements that exist within contractor organisations. This information will enable the Council to plan progress towards achieving this aim.
3. The following amendments have been presented to Cabinet for decision (19 March 2024). Proposed amendments to the following measures:
 - **Measure 13:** 'The percentage of people accessing leisure facilities who report positive well-being (a high number is better)' has been **removed** from the reporting, as the data is not available from the provider.
 - **Measure 16:** 'Number of learners enrolled in local authority community learning per 1,000 population (a high number is better)' has been **removed** from the reporting. It is considered that this measure does not adequately reflect adult learning in the county, and relevant data are not available to report accurate enrolment figures nor meaningful updates.
 - **Measure 34:** 'Number of households who are living in temporary accommodation (a low number is better)' has been **updated** to add clarifying information in brackets. It now reads: 'Number of households who are living in temporary accommodation (those owed S68 interim duty who are/may be homeless and in priority need) (a low number is better)'.
 - **Measure 35:** 'A reduction in the child poverty rate' has been **amended** to 'The child absolute poverty rate'; this clarifies that the measure is monitoring the actual rate and not calculating a reduction. The aim is to enable readers of the report to understand the actual rate of child poverty over time.
 - **Measure 37:** 'Number of households who are homeless (a low number is better)' has been **updated** to add clarifying information in brackets. It now reads: 'Number of households who are homeless (those owed S73 duty to relieve homelessness and final S75 duty to help secure accommodation for those in priority need) (a low number is better)'.

For reference:

APPENDIX 1 – QUESTION BANK (Extracted from the Performance Document)

What should we think about when reviewing our performance and business plans? The bullets below are a brief example of the types of questions we should ask ourselves when we are evaluating our performance.

- **What are you concerned about?**
 - What plays on your mind? What would you change if you could?
- **Have there been any situational/policy changes which have impacted upon delivery?**
 - These may be internal, external, local, or national – please think about the broader environment and bigger picture.
- **How much have we achieved this quarter?**
 - This is a good place to share any measurements you may use, such as % customer satisfaction, number of surveys circulated and number returned, % planned activity completed within timescale, etc.
- **How do we know how well it has gone?**
 - What did we achieve?
 - What did we learn? Are there any lessons learned/areas of good practice which could be noted / shared wider?
 - Who has benefited from what we've done? How? What difference has been made?
 - What have residents, partners, and regulators said during the quarter (including engagement activities, complaints, compliments, and audits) about your service?
 - What messages do you need to share with the people of Powys? How have you planned to progress them?
- **Have any risks or issues changed, or have new ones been identified? Have any risks been de-escalated?**
 - Has the risk / issue register been updated?
- **Do we have the necessary resources to progress this work?**
 - For example, identify any issues with workforce, finance, assets, and other resources.
 - Are you delivering within budget?
 - If the necessary resources are not available, what plans have been put in place? Can the activity continue?
- **Do we need any support from others (other services, partners, etc.)?**
 - For example, where delivery is dependent upon support services like Transformation and Democratic Services, Digital and Economy Services, or strategic partners like PTHB, we need to liaise with them to keep them informed and to seek assistance where they can help unblock some barriers to completion.
- **Other**
 - Is there anything that may affect whether this activity can be achieved as planned and within timescale and current resources?
 - What can we do differently?
 - What changes do we need to make to our action plan (including our Integrated Business Plan) based on what has happened and what we've learned this quarter?
 - Do any activities need to be escalated to discuss whether they should be put on hold or ceased entirely?

Key Feeders (tick all that apply)

Strategic Risk		Cabinet Work Plan	
Director / Head of Service Key Issue		External / Internal Inspection	
Existing Commitment / Annual Report		Performance / Finance Issue	✓
Suggestion from Public		Referral from Council / Committee	
Corporate Improvement Plan	✓	Impacting Public / other services	
Service Integrated Business Plan			
Suggestion from Members			
Partnerships			

Scrutiny Impact (tick all that apply)

Policy Review		Performance	✓
Informing Policy Development		Evidence Gathering	
Risk		Corporate Improvement Plan	✓
Service Integrated Business Plan		Partnerships	
Pre-Decision Scrutiny		Finance / Budget	

Other (please specify)

N/A

Suggested scrutiny activity - Committee's Role:**Scrutinising the progress, processes, and impact of performance and performance management within the Council.**

- Responsibility to continuously ask whether we are doing what we said we would do, and whether we are doing it well.
- Reviewing, analysing, and evaluating the performance of the Council, including the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard, for quality, relevance, and usefulness.
- Identifying and voicing any queries or concerns that arise, helping to ensure robust procedures and activities.
- Working with Cabinet to seek assurance and develop performance and performance approaches.
- Balancing the concerns of the people and communities of Powys with issues of strategic risk and importance.
- Supporting the voice of the people of Powys to be heard in the decision-making process.

On what specific elements of the report would scrutiny comment add value

- Review and evaluation: informed enquiry / recommendations; to review the information, ask questions, make enquiries, and make recommendations.
- Seek assurance and clarification about progress towards achieving the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan priorities, and ensuring that service priorities will be met effectively, efficiently, and within the allocated timescales and resources.

Example questions:

- a. Is the content accessible and easy to understand?
- b. Does the information provide a clear understanding of what work the Council is undertaking to meet the ambitions of *Stronger, Fairer, Greener*?
- c. Are the targets provided against measures appropriate e.g. too high/too low etc?
- d. Does the Committee feel the future actions will help achieve the objective and to what extent?
- e. Based on your work as a Committee in the last quarter, is there anything the Committee aware of which they feel should be considered within the report?
- f. Based on your work as a Committee, does the information interact with any resource (workforce or finance) challenges identified?
- g. Thinking around access to services, can the Committee provide views based upon the aspirations of the Plan and what is being delivered so far based upon the information provided?
- h. Thinking around workforce and real living wage accreditations, can the Committee provide views based upon the aspirations of the Plan and what is being delivered so far based upon the information provided?
- i. Thinking around poverty and inequality, can the Committee provide views based upon the aspirations of the Plan and what is being delivered so far based upon the information provided?
- j. Is there anything identified within the report which the Committee would like a further follow up/deep dive session around?

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Joint Scrutiny Committee, 28 February 2024

Report Author:	Councillor James Gibson-Watt, Leader, and Cabinet Member for an Open and Transparent Powys
Lead Officer:	Catherine James, Head of Transformation and Democratic Services
Report Title:	Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard: Quarter 3 Performance (2023-2024)
Report For:	Information

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the Council's 2023 to 2024 Quarter 3 (October to December) Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard.
- 1.2. The Scorecard is available on the Council's website by visiting: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14124/Corporate-Plan-Updates>

2. Background

- 2.1. The Quarter 3 Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard shows the Council's performance against its expectations between April and December 2023.
- 2.2. The new performance year commenced on 01 April 2023 to coincide with the publication of the Council's new [Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan: Stronger, Fairer, Greener](#). (We abbreviate references to this plan as 'CSEP'.)
- 2.3. The purpose of the CSEP is to present the well-being priorities for the Council for the years 2023 to 2027, which support the [seven national well-being goals](#) of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Council's priorities are its three corporate well-being objectives, which are:
 1. We will improve people's awareness of services, and how to access them, so that they can make informed choices.
 2. We will support good quality, sustainable, employment, providing training opportunities, and pursuing real living wage employer accreditation.
 3. We will work to tackle poverty and inequality to support the well-being of the people of Powys.
- 2.4. The CSEP contains all the priority work for the Council, driven by the Cabinet's work programme and ambitions. The objectives and measures integrate the equality objectives and measures to ensure that we work towards a fairer Powys in all aspects of our work, and that equality is at the heart of our approach.
- 2.5. The well-being objectives are organisation-wide areas of focus that we actively pursue so that we can make positive improvements to our services. The performance process helps the Council to reflect on the year so far, to evaluate

its approaches and contributions, to consider what has been learned, and to plan what actions can or should be taken to support ongoing progress.

- 2.6. All council services and staff help to contribute to meeting the Council's ambition. Each service has provided a written update about how they have contributed towards the achievement of the Council's three corporate objectives and, where appropriate, the supporting measures.
- 2.7. The new reporting system only provides the following options for identifying progress against a measure target:
 - On track
 - Off track
 - No data (data not due to be reported)
 - Not reported (data unexpectedly unavailable or not yet provided)

Importantly, measure statuses are automatically calculated by the system as an indicator to identify whether the progress towards the activity met planned expectations (the targets). These statuses are used as conversation starts to enable activities to be considered in a more detailed context to determine what went well, where more or different support or resource may be necessary, and what lessons may be learned.

3. Advice

- 3.1. That the committee receive the Quarter 3 (2023-2024) Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard that is published on the Council's website: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14124/Corporate-Plan-Updates> and review the Council's progress against the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan.
- 3.2. That the committee recognise that the Council is reporting against its new Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan (CSEP) and, as such, the Council is keen to progress and improve the quality and content of the reporting.
- 3.3. All Directors, Heads of Service, and Senior Managers are asked to review the appropriateness and relevance of the reporting on an ongoing basis to support the continuous improvement and to identify areas to which their work contributes. The Council's long-term aspiration is to use each quarter's reporting to develop a relevant and informative source of information that is used both as a mechanism for recognising achievements and opportunities and as a means of identifying patterns and areas in need of further development or adaptation.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1. Services set out their objectives that contribute to the delivery of the Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan in their individual Integrated Business Plans. The activity undertaken and reported in this quarter has been delivered from within service budgets. Any subsequent remedial action to improve performance will be considered by the relevant service, it is anticipated that this can be delivered from existing resources.

4.2. The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the report.

5. Legal implications

5.1. Professional Lead – Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer notes the content of the report. There are no other legal matters arising from the report.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1. The Corporate and Strategic Plan places responding to the dual climate and nature emergencies as a central thread to its strategic direction and seeks to ensure it is embedded within governance arrangements.

6.2. Workstreams within the Plan relating to the Climate and Nature emergency will be delivered by the Council through its Climate programme. Further information detailing how this Plan supports the Council's response to the Climate and Nature emergencies are explicitly detailed within the Plan.

7. Data Protection

7.1. Not applicable. No identifiable information is contained within the reporting.

8. Comment from local member(s)

8.1. Comments were not sought from individual members, as the performance report is equally applicable to the whole county.

9. Impact Assessment

9.1. An impact assessment has not been undertaken for the quarterly performance updates as it does not include any proposals or service changes. However, the impact assessment of the CSEP is available [here](#).

10. Recommendations

That the committee:

10.1. Consider whether they are assured that performance is progressing well, or that mitigating actions have been identified.

10.2. Consider whether they are satisfied that any future actions identified within the CSEP Scorecard will effectively improve performance in line with outcomes set out in the [Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan](#).

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