
DRAFT STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2012-16

Reason for the Report

1. To provide Members with an opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2012-16 prior to its consideration by the Executive.

Background

2. The Committee's terms of reference include responsibility for scrutiny of the Council's corporate equalities policies, schemes and action plans.
3. The 2010 Equality Act creates a new public sector equality duty, which tasks all public bodies with preparing and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan every four years that covers all 'protected characteristics'; namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including non-belief, excluding political), sex and sexual orientation. In short it is a plan to ensure equality for all. The Council must publish its Strategic Equality Plan by 2 April 2012.
4. The public sector equality duty requires public authorities to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities, having regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
5. This Committee last received a presentation on the Council's approach to equalities in March 2011. At that time Members heard that Cardiff compares favourably in its Equalities approach against local authorities, both across Wales and nationally. The Committee were reassured that the Council's approach to providing for all protected characteristics within the scheme would be based on need. Members felt that in the current climate of partnership and collaboration and the 'What Matters' integrated partnership approach to delivering public services it would be sensible to aspire to a single equalities scheme for Cardiff.

Issues

6. Members will find attached at **Appendix 1** the 'Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2012/16'. It sets the context for equalities and the challenges the Council faces in delivering equality within a City that has marked disparities between its north and south.
7. The Council and its City wide partners have published a single strategy for the City '*What Matters: The 10 Year Strategy for Cardiff*'. The strategy sets out 7 outcomes that all partners will work towards collectively to achieve the vision of Cardiff as '*.. a world class European capital city with an exceptional quality of life, at the heart of a thriving City region*'. The outcomes are:
- People in Cardiff are healthy
 - Cardiff is a clean, attractive and sustainable environment
 - People in Cardiff are safe and feel safe
 - Cardiff has a thriving and prosperous economy
 - People in Cardiff achieve their full potential

- Cardiff is a great place to live, work and play
- Cardiff is a fair, just and inclusive society

8. The Strategic Equality Plan under consideration is presented as a strand of 'What Matters', its structure and title 'Everyone Matters' a natural evolution of the City's single strategy document.

9. The Plan takes each of the agreed 7 outcomes and, based on the results of a comprehensive 'needs assessment' which revealed a common theme of inequality, considers the inequality across each outcome from the perspective of the protected characteristics. It identifies 20 objectives to address these inequalities (ref pages 14-15).

10. The Plan makes clear that the 20 Strategic Equality Objectives will be embedded within the Council's Corporate Plan for 2012/15. Importantly it states that the specific actions to deliver the Strategic Equality Objectives will be detailed within Service Area Business Plans.

11. For each of the 7 outcomes the plan outlines where the Council is at present, and establishes objectives for the coming 4 years. For a quick reference to the key information on each outcome Members are referred to the following pages:

Outcome	<i>Page</i>
People in Cardiff are healthy	20
Cardiff is a clean, attractive and sustainable environment	24
People in Cardiff are safe and feel safe	29
Cardiff has a thriving and prosperous economy	33
People in Cardiff achieve their full potential	37
Cardiff is a great place to live, work and play	41
Cardiff is a fair, just and inclusive society	47

12. For each strategic objective, evidence from analysis and research illustrates the inequality identified. Listed below each objective are the workstream

areas which the Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) will focus on to tackle the inequalities. For example, a strategic objective of the 'People in Cardiff are Healthy' outcome is 'to reduce differentials in life expectancy and reduce health inequalities across the City'. A graph illustrates the life expectancy of males and females in Wales, and the objective will be tackled within the following work streams:

- Early Years Intervention
- Substance Misuse
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Older People Services.

13. Of particular interest to Members will be the section outlining Cardiff's role as an employer in delivering the strategic equality plan (p48). It states a commitment to having a workforce that reflects the communities served, removing barriers and perceptions that prevent and discourage people gaining employment. The Council has approximately 15,000 employees, only 1.2% identify as disabled and there are lower proportions of ethnic minority people employed by Cardiff Council than in the local population.

14. Members may also be interested in the impact this strategic equality plan will have on the Council's commissioning and procurement (p53). The Council recognises that its spending power enables it to influence how others work and the plan states that the Council will require any company or business that wishes to be one of its contractors or suppliers to agree to abide by Cardiff Council's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement.

15. Following its consideration of equalities in March 2011 the Committee felt there were implications for small businesses and wished to ensure that small and medium businesses were not disadvantaged as a result of the Council's commitment to ensure its contractors commit to abide by its Equal Opportunities Policy. Members urged that where there is a training need the Council puts in place opportunities to bring SMEs up to speed with its new equalities standard.

16. The document outlines how equalities will be monitored in Cardiff (p54). The monitoring of the Strategic Equality Objectives will be done through the Corporate Plan and by quarterly review by the Corporate Management Board, Senior Leadership Team, Council's Executive and Scrutiny committees.
17. In March 2011 the Committee were pleased to hear that equalities would in future be more evidence based but felt that the Council may not be able to tackle all that transpired from the needs analysis. The Committee felt it would be essential to measure the effectiveness of any intervention resourced by the Council, and were reassured that in future there will be significantly more performance monitoring of equalities.
18. The Strategic Equality Plan is currently out to consultation, which closes on 27 January 2012. The summary at **Appendix 2** gives Members an indication of the feedback received following two consultation events held on 12th & 13th December 2011.
19. Councillor Judith Woodman, Deputy Leader, Communities, Housing & Social Justice; Sarah McGill, Corporate Chief Officer Communities; and Rachel Jones, Operational Manager, Partnerships and Citizen Focus will be at Committee to present the draft Strategic Equality Scheme 2012-16 and take Members' questions.

Legal Implications

20. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions

taken by or on behalf the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers of behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

21. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

Note the report and consider whether it wishes to feed its comments and concerns for consideration in the development of the final draft Strategic Equality Plan prior to its consideration by the Executive.

MIKE DAVIES

Head of Scrutiny, Performance & Improvement

6 January 2012