

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2020-24

MEETING: County Council

DATE: 5 March 2020

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Strategic Equality Plan and Strategic Equality Objectives in accordance with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 and to show actions that will be taken to address issues of inequality identified in the county.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council approves the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.

3 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Monmouthshire County Council is committed to building sustainable and resilient communities. This is our clear and unifying purpose, running through everything we do. We can only achieve this by valuing and making the most of the abilities and contributions of everyone in our communities, irrespective of age, gender, race, sexual orientation of any of the other characteristics that make us who we are.
- 3.2 This document uses evidence gleaned from two substantial assessments of need and well-being within the County produced under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. As a result this plan is built on a strong evidence base drawn from data, policy and community engagement. This has provided us with a far clearer understanding of the issues within the county
- 3.3 Another key source of evidence was the Equality and Human Rights (EHRC) document “Is Wales Fairer 2018”. This publication provided a comprehensive review of how Wales is performing on equality and human rights. Officers and the Cabinet Member met with representatives from the EHRC to explore this evidence and identify the issues that were most pertinent to Monmouthshire.
- 3.4 We know that the things highlighted in these documents are symptoms of complex problems and we also know they cannot be solved by one organisation alone. Public, third and private sector must work together. Most importantly, we must support people and communities in developing their own solutions that are sustainable and which can deliver both immediate and long-term benefits.

- 3.5 The first two Strategic Equality Plans established a platform for trying to embed the principle of equality and diversity. This third version has taken in to account the very rigorous evidence base referred to above and is far more focussed on addressing issues that have been identified as existing in Monmouthshire and involve a considerable element of partnership working to achieve those outcomes. In this regard it is now far more clearly aligned with the council's Social Justice Strategy.

4 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 The identified actions within the strategy will have a positive effect on people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

5 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This Strategic Equality Plan has utilised a comprehensive evidence base to shape the strategic objectives. Each of these has been considered in the context of alternative policy choices that could be made.

6 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The performance of this SEP will be monitored in an annual monitoring report that will be presented to Strong Communities Select Committee. We will be assessing progress against the evidence identified

7 REASONS

- 7.1 The Council's first two Strategic Equality Plans concentrated on getting the foundations for Equality and Diversity in place in Monmouthshire. Having done that this Strategic Equality Plan utilises a comprehensive evidence base (Well-being Assessment, Population Needs Assessment and "Is Wales Fairer 20418") to make a real difference to people across the county with protected characteristics.
- 7.2 To ensure that the authority complies with the requirement to publish equality objectives in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 There are no additional resource requirements arising directly as a result of the Strategic Equality Plan. However the plan features a broad range of activities, some of which will have been subject to specific decisions with their own individual resource requirements.

9 CONSULTEES:

SLT

Cabinet
Strong Communities Select Committee
Monmouthshire Inclusion Group, GAVO, 50+ Forum, Access 4 All Forum, Monmouth
Visually Impaired Group

The development of the plan began with a broad set of evidence, through consultation this was gradually sifted and developed into themes and subsequently objectives. A public consultation on the objectives ran from 6th January 2019 to the 15th February 2020. There were no substantial changes to the objectives resulting from this. The plan was scrutinised by Strong Communities Select Committee. One result from this work was a recognition of the need for more timely and robust monitoring of progress against the plan.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

11 AUTHOR:

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12 CONTACT DETAILS:

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