

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of the Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting: 10 March 2020
Cabinet Member: Councillor Nia Jeffreys
Contact Officer: Delyth G Williams, Policy and Equality Officer
Contact Telephone Number: 01286 679708
Title of Item: Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

The Cabinet is requested to approve the document

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The purpose of the Plan is to reduce inequality between people with protected characteristics and people without those characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Cabinet's wishes.

3 INTRODUCTION

This is the Council's third Strategic Equality Plan. The first was published in 2012, and the following issue in March 2016. The Plan for 2020-24 builds on these previous plans, recognising that there is still core work to be done to secure equality for people with the 9 characteristics protected by the Act.

Between November 2019 and the beginning of February 2020, following the Cabinet's approval, the Council engaged on the proposed contents of the Plan. 190 responses were received, and the vast majority of these were supportive of the objectives. Meetings were also held with the Equality Core Group and two self-advocacy groups for people with a learning impairment. More information on the responses is available in the Equality Impact Assessment.

Based on the observations received we have revised the Plan, the wording of two Objectives and the Action Plan. We believe that these changes improve and strengthen the Plan so that we can genuinely move towards ensuring fairness for everyone and embed the concept of equality within the Council's work.

Improving the information we have from and about people with protected characteristics is important to us as a Council with the "Ensuring Fairness for All" project included in the new Gwynedd Council plan 2018-23 (which will be

submitted to the Full Council for adoption on the 5th of March). The outcomes and findings of this project will underpin all future work in this field.

4 THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the duty to produce and publish a Strategic Equality Plan. We have included representatives of people with particular equality characteristics from the beginning. We have also engaged with the public and have improved the Plan based on their comments, and saw that the vast majority of respondents supported the approach taken in the Plan. We therefore believe that this is a strong plan which will lead to improving equity to all people in Gwynedd.

5 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

We have included the Equality Core Group from the start of the process. We will be engaging extensively should the draft Plan be approved.

An Equality Impact Assessment is attached. Its findings support the direction taken and have not identified any significant negative impacts.

The Statutory Officers' observations

i) Chief Finance Officer

I support the decision sought to adopt the Equality Plan for 2020-2024.

I am comfortable that the cost of the implementation plan will be comparatively low. I expect that it will be possible to meet these costs within existing revenue budgets but if not, additional funding will need to be sought through the usual arrangements.

ii) Propriety Officer

In accordance with the Council's duties under equalities legislation the Council needs to review its Equalities Objectives at least every four years. Undertaking an engagement process meets the statutory requirements and principles in relation to the holding of a review. It is important that the Cabinet satisfies its self that what is recommended represents an appropriate response to the consultation. I have nothing further to add in relation to propriety.

