

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Date of meeting: 6 July 2021
Cabinet Member: Councillor Nia Jeffreys
Contact Officer: Delyth G Williams, Policy and Equality Officer
Contact Telephone Number: 01286 679708
Title of Item: 2020-21 Annual Report, Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24

Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

The Cabinet is requested to note the content and approve the 2020/21 Annual Report and the 2020-24 Equality Plan.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The intention of the Annual Report is to note the progress made with the Action Plan for the 5 Equality Objectives that we are working towards during 2020-21, as noted in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. The Cabinet is requested to approve this progress. Reporting annually is a duty of the 2010 Equality Act as it is implemented in Wales.

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The purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan is to reduce inequality between people with protected characteristics and people without those characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The Ensuring Fairness for All Project (i.e. the Equality Plan), has been identified by the Cabinet as one of the priority projects within the Council Plan.

This is the first Annual Report of the 2020-24 Equality Plan. The year in question, 2020-21, has been very unusual. As a result of the pandemic, and the associated restrictions, we had to look at different ways to achieve a number of the activities, such as the engagement work, where it was not possible to do much of what we intended to do. Despite this resulting in some slippage, we are confident to be able to deliver the Action Plan within the timetable.

Guidance was received from the Equality and Human Rights Commission that we should assess the suitability of the objectives in our Equality Plan as a result of the pandemic. We have done so and are of the opinion that they are suitable.

The five objectives are:

- Objective 1: To strengthen and deepen the capacity and commitment of Gwynedd Council Staff and Elected Members in the field of Equality, by ensuring that they receive the right training.
- Objective 2: Improve the information we have from and about people with protected characteristics.
- Objective 3: Build on the work already carried out to embed Equality Impact Assessments as a tool to ensure better decision-making.
- Objective 4: Act to reduce the pay gap between the sexes and identify any pay gap based on any other characteristic.
- Objective 5: Take action to attract a range of applicants for posts in order to increase the diversity of our workforce.

The report considers these in turn, as in the Plan itself. In line with guidance, it also includes details on how the Council gathers and uses information about equality. It is also important to identify that working on the Plan's Objectives alone will not ensure equality, as the principles must be embedded in our everyday work. Therefore, we are looking at examples of the Council's work in the field from day-to-day.

4 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

The Strategic Equality Plan's Equality Impact Assessment has been updated as a result of the new situation and the data around Covid-19.

The Statutory Officers' observations

i) Chief Finance Officer

Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety.

ii) Propriety Officer

I welcome this Annual Report on performance against a duty which is relevant to all the Council's activities.