

REPORT TO: Executive Board

REPORT NO: CE/03/20
DATE: 11 February 2020

LEAD MEMBER: Councillor John Pritchard
(People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty)

CONTACT OFFICER: Kate Adamson (Tel: 292288)

SUBJECT: Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2018-19

WARD: All

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the Executive Board with an update on progress in implementing the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020) in 2018-19.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council is making positive progress in embedding equality across all departments. This is evidenced in the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) Annual Report 2018-19 (**Appendix 1**).
- 2.2 All departments identify the contribution they are making to the corporate equality objectives. Further work is needed to align the process of agreeing annual contributions more fully with the service business planning process.
- 2.3 Equality Impact Assessments [EIAs] are being undertaken by all departments. The Equality Improvement Group [EIG] provides a support and monitoring function within departments. Introduced in 2014, local quality assurance criteria have been used on an annual basis by the EIG to review a sample of EIAs across the Council. A report on the quality of EIAs is provided to SLT on an annual basis. Good progress has been made in implementing the EIA process since the tool was introduced. Moving forward, we will continue to work with the EIG during 2019-20 in order to address areas for improvement and continue to embed the EIA process across the Council.
- 2.4 The corporate approach to equality and diversity is one of mainstreaming across the Council whilst taking into account the capacity of departments, which has reduced in recent years owing to budget reductions. As a result, whilst there is evidence of progress, some areas of the work remain underdeveloped (e.g. the development of measurable equality targets and outcomes). Further actions for 2019-20 are identified in Section 18 of the SEP Annual Report 2018-19 (**Appendix 1**).

- 2.5 A new Council Plan (2020-2023) is currently being drafted and consulted upon ready for implementation on 31 May 2020. The objectives within the new Strategic Equality Plan (2020-2024) will form part of the new Council Plan.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Executive Board approves progress on implementing the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20) outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2018-19 (Appendix 1).

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory duties under The Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Council must comply with The Equality Act 2010 and The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2010, further details of which are available at: [Advice and guidance on The Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duty in Wales](#)
- 4.2 The Council has a legal duty to publish a Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), action plan and annual reports. An Annual Equality Report must be produced and published by 31 March each year covering the preceding financial year. The Council's report covering the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 is available at **Appendix 1**. The report details progress in relation to the specific and general duties and the SEP action plan.

Equality Act (2010) - General Duties

- 4.3 The Equality Act 2010 brought together a number of different pieces of legislation to provide a single legal framework to more effectively tackle discrimination and disadvantage. The Act sets out groups people which are specifically listed as having 'protected characteristics':
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Race
 - Religion and Belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Marriage and Civil Partnership
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
- 4.4 In April 2011, a statutory 'general duty' was introduced for all public bodies in England and Wales to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not.

- 4.5 A range of activities have been progressed in relation to each of the general duties and these are detailed in Section 7 of the SEP Annual Report.

Equality Act (2010) (Wales) Regulations 2011

- 4.6 Public bodies in Wales, including the Council, also have specific legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011:

- Publishing a Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives every 4 years;
- Engagement and involvement activities for groups with protected characteristics;
- Ensuring all published material is accessible;
- Assessing the impact of relevant policies and plans;
- Training and the collection of employment information;
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the Equality Act across the organisation;
- Addressing unfair pay differences;
- Using procurement practice to contribute to the delivery of equality objectives; and
- Reviewing progress in implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and related action plans.

- 4.7 A range of activities have been progressed in relation to the specific duties and these are detailed in Section 8 of the SEP Annual Report.

- 4.8 The SEP Annual Report highlights the further work needed from 2019-20 onwards to embed equality monitoring across the Council. Objectives for the new 'Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24' have been drafted and consulted on. The final plan will be in place by 31 March 2020.

Equality Impact Assessments

- 4.9 The online EIA tool continues to be refined in light of feedback from colleagues. Impact assessments are fully accessible to Elected Members and this, together with the mandatory inclusion of EIA information in Scrutiny and Executive Board report templates, has led to a more collaborative approach to EIAs. The quality of EIAs is monitored on an annual basis by the EIG and opportunities for further development are identified via this process.

Quality Assurance

- 4.10 In May 2019, members of the internal Equality Improvement Group [EIG] reviewed a sample of departmental Equality Impact Assessments [EIAs] against the agreed local quality assurance criteria. The basis for the assessment criteria is the legal duty to demonstrate 'due regard'. The findings of the EIA quality assurance review has indicated that overall:

- Evidence that EIAs are being routinely entered onto the online system;
- There is evidence that EIAs are generally being undertaken in a more timely way and are being appropriately delegated;
- There are examples where consultation has taken place, informing the EIA, however further development is required for this to be consistent across all EIAs;
- All budget related decisions were subject to an EIA;
- The process for publishing EIAs as part of Executive Board and

Committee reports is working well.

4.11 In addition, the internal quality assurance procedure has identified a number of opportunities for continued improvement including:

- Improving the quality of EIA Screening as an integral and mandatory part of the EIA;
- Further development of consistency in the timeliness of beginning an EIA;
- Promote greater understanding of equality and diversity across the protected characteristics;
- Improving the use of routine service level equality focused monitoring data to inform service provision, Equality Impact Assessments and associated decision making;
- Improving the use of the follow up function within the EIA tool to consider the realised, unrealised or unintended impacts upon implementation of a proposal; and
- Improving the completeness of consultation evidence information, so where good consultation has been undertaken, this is detailed within the EIA.

These improvements will continue to be progressed via the Senior Leadership Team and the Equality Improvement Group.

4.12 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been completed for this report insert EIA number FIN/EIA00057/2016 at **Appendix 2**. No issues were identified. Activities identified in this report are subject to their own EIA and are therefore reported separately.

Compliance

4.13 The responsibility for carrying out EIAs rests with Chief Officers and they should put in place systems to ensure that this is done. As they are a key element of the governance framework, the Council's equality arrangements will be subject to regular, but not necessarily annual, audits which will provide independent assurance on the effectiveness of the controls put in place by the Chief Officer. Such audits may include compliance checks on EIAs, but this will be dependent on an Internal Audit assessment of risk at the commencement of the audit.

4.14 The results of the audit will be reported to the relevant Chief Officer, Senior Leadership Team and the Audit Committee. The Internal Audit Section provides guidance to assist the Council and Chief Officers in ensuring that there are effective internal controls in place in relation to equality and diversity.

Welsh Language and Culture

4.15 The Council's Welsh Language Scheme was replaced on 30 March 2016 with Welsh Language Standards. These were introduced as part of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 with the purpose of setting a consistent level of service that Welsh speakers can expect to receive in Wales. These form an important part of the Council's equality and diversity work and are reported on separately. Further details are available at: [Welsh language standards](#)

Workforce equality monitoring

- 4.16 The Employment Equality Monitoring Reports are published annually, and show comparisons over 3 years. The most up to date publication, now includes the gender pay gap and has also been published in open format, which was a requirement of Welsh Government. The report provides information on the various protected characteristics we are able to report on and other policies and practices that have made a positive contribution to the equality agenda. The data relates to individuals directly employed by the Council. A key priority identified within our Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20) was the need to improve our workforce equality monitoring in order to better target actions to promote workforce diversity. To address this area for improvement an action to improve the way we capture this data was included within the Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy and associated action plan. The facility for employees to self-report this equality monitoring data online is now possible in our 'My View' system. This aims to improve the quantity and quality of workforce monitoring information held which can then enable improved analysis and targeting of actions. This year as a result of the work with Welsh Government to publish 'open' spreadsheets on equality data we are enabling easier access and making data more accessible. The reports are available at: [Employment equality monitoring reports](#)

Training and awareness raising

- 4.17 To support the mainstreaming approach a range of training and awareness training has been delivered across the Council. Further details are available in Section 16 of the SEP Annual report 2018-19 (Appendix 1).

Community Engagement

- 4.18 In 2018, the Council adopted its new 'Involvement Strategy'. The vision is that all people have the information they need to influence the planning and delivery of services, they are engaged and consulted with on decisions that affect them, and where possible, we will work together to design and deliver services. The implementation of the strategy has further improved consultation and engagement across the Council, informing EIAs and making decision making more robust.

Conclusions

- 4.19 The corporate approach to the equality and diversity agenda supports the Council to meet its legal duties under The Equality Act 2010 and the associated Wales Regulations 2011, while recognising the need to co-ordinate a mainstream approach with services taking the lead. Monitoring of the Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20) objectives within service plans and the use of the online equality impact assessment processes provides evidence of our progress and reflects the hard work within all departments to embed equality and diversity work. There continue to be areas for improvement, however it is important to acknowledge the impact that reduced budgets have on the pace of progress. The commitment to equality and diversity is strong within the Council, however some elements of work remain underdeveloped due to capacity across departments.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy Framework** – The work described in this report supports the Council in its commitment to prioritise people who may be vulnerable to social exclusion.

5.2 **Budget** – During the period that this report covers (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019) the budget for the Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team was contained within the Finance Department. There are no budget implications associated with this particular report.

5.3 **Legal** – The work described in this report assists the Council to meet its statutory duties under The Equality Act 2010 and the associated Wales Regulations 2011.

5.4 **Staffing** – There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

5.5 **Equality/Human Rights** –

Members are advised of their duty to consider the full Equality Impact Assessment which is available at [Equality Impact Assessment](#) report number [FIN/EIA00057/2016]. Members of the public can request a copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment from the Contact Officer named in the header box of this report.

A summary of the Equality Impact Assessment is attached as **Appendix 2**.

5.6 **Risks** – Potential risks may arise owing to constrained budgets, which could reduce the capacity for departments to discharge their equality duty responsibilities. In such an instance, moral, legal, reputational and financial risks may arise.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Lead Members SLT and SLT have been consulted in the preparation of the SEP Annual Report 2018-19.

7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

7.1 On 28th November 2018, the Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee received an update on progress in implementing the Council's current Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020) during 2017-18. The Committee endorsed the progress made and the plans for further improvement.

7.2 The Committee made the following recommendations:

- (i) That a survey be undertaken with Councillors to establish a baseline in terms of their understanding and use of the EIA toolkit and that this be used to inform further Member training;
- (ii) That the Council investigate the possibility of making local members aware of Syrian refugees in their wards so that they can make contact with them;
- (iii) That an All Member Information Report be issued and a report be brought to the Committee in March in relation to the work underway to plan for the outcome of Brexit in March 2019.

7.3 During 2018-19, the following progress has been made against these recommendations:

- (i) Work to develop a survey to establish a baseline in terms of Members' understanding and use of the EIA toolkit has not yet commenced. This is an

ongoing piece of work which will be used to inform further Member training in 2019-20;

- (ii) The Council investigated the possibility of informing the relevant Local Member when any Syrian refugees are housed within their Ward so that they could provide help and assistance to these families. However, in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and in order to respect each refugee's right to privacy, the Council is unable to share details relating to Syrian refugees with Local Members. As an alternative, the Council now includes details of the relevant Local Member in the welcome pack provided to Syrian refugees when they are housed within a Ward, so that the refugee can choose to contact their Local Member if they so wish.
- (iii) A report on the Council's preparations for Brexit was submitted to the Committee in March 2019. It can be viewed here: [Report on Wrexham Council's preparations for Brexit March 2019](#)

- 7.4 Progress in implementing the current Council's Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020) during 2018-19 was originally listed on the Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme. Each Committee's work programme was reviewed during 2019 and Chief Officers were asked to consider current items on each forward work programme.
- 7.5 As a result of the review, the SEP Annual Report was removed from the Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme. The report is submitted to Executive Board where there is an opportunity for Members to review the report and refer for scrutiny any areas of concern or where the value of scrutiny is identified.
- 7.6 Members agreed with this approach and it was decided that only the objectives of the new 'Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24' would be submitted to the Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee, not the SEP Annual Report 2018-19.
- 7.7 The role of Scrutiny will be to consider the new SEP objectives and the results of the consultation before they are finalised and included in the new Strategic Equality Plan (2020-24) which is due to be in place by 31 March 2020.

| BACKGROUND PAPERS | LOCATION | WEBSITE INFO. |
|---|----------|---|
| Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 | Internet | http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/public-sector-providers/introducingthe-duty |

Wrexham County Borough Council
Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020)
Annual Report April 2018 – March 2019

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg. Os ydych yn darllen y fersiwn ar lein, defnyddiwch y ddolen "Cymraeg" ar ochr dde'r bar uchaf. Os ydych yn darllen copi papur, defnyddiwch y manylion cyswllt sydd ar gael yn y copi o'r fersiwn Gymraeg os gwelwch yn dda.

This document is available in Welsh. If you are reading the online version, please use the "Cymraeg" link on the right hand side of the top bar. If you are reading a paper copy, please use the contact details below to obtain a Welsh version.

Accessible Formats

This document and supporting documents will be published on the Council's website in English and Welsh in Microsoft Word and PDF formats in Arial font size 12 as standard. Other accessible formats including large print, Braille, British Sign Language DVD, easy-read, audio and electronic formats, and other languages will be available upon request.

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Wrexham County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2018-2019

Foreword:

This is the second annual report for the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016-20: https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/equality/2016/strategic_equality_plan_2016_2020.pdf

It covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. The report sets out:

- how the Council is meeting its general duties under the Equality Act 2010;
- how the Council is meeting its specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011; and
- progress against the equality objectives and actions set out in the plan.

Our key focus for 2018-2019 remained to:

- mainstream the equality agenda across the Council;
- embed the corporate equality objectives within departmental service plans;
- share knowledge of equality and diversity across the organisation;
- support staff to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the public sector equality duties; and
- continue to deliver services that meet the needs of our customers.

We have implemented the commitments made in the previous Annual Report (2017-2018) and have:

- Supported and enabled departments to meet the corporate equality objectives;
- Supported and enabled Syrian refugees to resettle in Wrexham as part of the Council's humanitarian support for people in extreme need;
- Supported the regional co-ordination of activities to tackle discrimination and foster good relations in relation to the Prevent Duty and Modern Slavery Duty;
- Supported the work of the North Wales Hate Crime Tactical Group;
- Supported improvements in the quality of workforce equality monitoring and analysis across the Council;
- Continued to improve the quality of Equality Impact Assessments;
- Built a suite of e-learning equality training modules.

Our Council Plan and Well-being Plan set out the objectives we are working to as a Council, and as a partner on Wrexham Public Services Board. This strategic equality planning process enables us to consider and address the different impacts our priorities and work has on different people and communities. I am pleased to say that progress has continued to be made this year due to the collective commitment and hard work of all Council departments. However, it is important to recognise and tackle on-going areas for improvement if we are to properly address inequality.

Councillor John Pritchard
Lead Member for People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty

1. Executive Summary:

- 1.1. The Council has a legal duty to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
 - Advance equality of opportunity; and
 - Foster good relations.
- 1.2. We must also ensure that we have the proper processes in place to promote equality and monitor the equality impact of our work.
- 1.3. The Strategic Equality Plan [SEP] 2016-20 sets out the equality aims and objectives we identified as being really important for the people of Wrexham. We have identified key people in the Council including the Lead Member for People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty, who has the remit of overseeing our work on equality and diversity , Chief Officers and representatives from the Equality Improvement Group to help guide the implementation of our Plan and to ensure that we develop a culture of continuous improvement.
https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/equality/2016/strategic_equality_plan_2016_2020.pdf
- 1.4. This report describes the progress we have made during 2018-2019 to implement the SEP, any additional actions described in the previous annual report and the processes we have put in place to help us.
- 1.5. Overall, we have made good progress implementing our SEP Action Plan 2018-2019; the Equality Act 2010 General Duty and the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011.
- 1.6. While good progress has been made there is much that remains to be done. In addition to the objectives already contained in the SEP 2016-20, we will continue to take forward the following objectives in 2019-2020:
 - Mainstream the equality agenda across the Council;
 - Embed the corporate equality objectives within departmental service plans;
 - Share knowledge of equality and diversity across the organisation;
 - Support staff to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the public sector equality duties; and
 - Continue to deliver services that meet the needs of our customers.
- 1.7. Further details are contained within this report and associated appendices. If

you would like to comment on it please contact us on:

Telephone: 01978 292271, Email: telluswhatyouthink@wrexham.gov.uk

2. Introduction and background:

2.1. Equality means:

‘An equal society protects and promotes real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situation and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.’

[WLGA, Equality Improvement Framework for Wales, 2012]

2.2. The Equality Act 2010 brought together a number of different pieces of legislation to provide a single legal framework to more effectively tackle discrimination and disadvantage. The Act sets out groups of people which are specifically listed as having ‘protected characteristics’:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Race;
- Religion and Belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership; and
- Pregnancy and Maternity

2.3. The Council’s Welsh Language Scheme was replaced on 30 March 2016 with Welsh Language Standards. These were introduced as part of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 with the purpose of setting a consistent level of service that Welsh speakers can expect to receive in Wales. These form an important part of the Council’s equality and diversity work and are reported separately. Further details are available at: [Welsh language standards](#)

2.4. In April 2011 a statutory ‘general duty’ was introduced for all public bodies in England and Wales to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not.

2.5. Public bodies in Wales, including the Council, also have specific legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) regulations 2011:

- Publishing a Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives every 4 years;
- Engagement and involvement activities for groups with 'protected characteristics';
- Ensuring all published material is accessible;
- Assessing the impact of relevant policies and plans;
- Training and the collection of employment information;
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the Equality Act across the organisation;
- Addressing unfair pay differences;
- Using procurement practice to contribute to the delivery of equality objectives; and
- Reviewing progress in implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and related action plans.

3. Wrexham Council Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2016-20:

3.1. The Council prepared its current SEP during 2016 following engagement with a wide range of local and regional groups representing people with protected characteristics. This enabled us to identify local equality objectives. We also worked with the other public bodies across North Wales to identify regional equality objectives. The evidence base used to identify these objectives is detailed within the SEP: [Wrexham Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020](#)

3.2. Actions to deliver the SEP objectives are contained within departmental service plans. **Appendix 1a** demonstrates how the equality objectives underpin all the work of the current Council Plan. Information at **Appendix 1b** highlights the progress made in relation to each of the corporate equality objectives.

3.3 The Council's overall work on equality is supported by the Welsh Language Standards
http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/welsh_language_scheme.htm
and the Customer Services Strategy which is detailed at:

Report to Executive Board Strategies for Engaged and Satisfied Customers May 2014

A revised Customer Services Strategy will be implemented in 2020/21.

4. Wrexham Public Service Board:

4.1. Wrexham Public Services Board (PSB) is the statutory partnership responsible for improving the well-being of Wrexham. It is made up from all public sector bodies

working in Wrexham and the Association for Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham.
[Information about Wrexham's Public Service Board](#)

- 4.2. The purpose of the PSB is to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wrexham County Borough. In pursuing this purpose the Board will contribute to seven national well-being goals, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:
- A prosperous Wales;
 - A resilient Wales;
 - A healthier Wales;
 - A more equal Wales;
 - A Wales of cohesive communities;
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and
 - A globally responsible Wales.
- 4.3. The PSB published a Local Well-being Plan for Wrexham County Borough in May 2018 setting out local objectives and the steps it proposes to take to meet them.
- 4.4. Programme boards have been established to make progress against the key priorities of:
- A Healthy Start for All
 - Lifelong Learning
 - Good Health for Older People
- 4.5. In developing and implementing the Wrexham Well-being Plan, the programme board action plans are also required to take account of the sustainable development principle by applying the following **5 ways of working**:
- Looking to the **long term** so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
 - Taking an **integrated** approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives;
 - **Involving** a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them;
 - Working with others in a **collaborative** way to find shared sustainable

solutions;

- Understanding the root causes of issues to **prevent** them from occurring.

- 4.6. It is clear that together the Well-being goals and the 5 Ways of Working have the potential to significantly address local inequality. The development of the Wrexham Well-being Plan ensured that equality was fully considered and the Wellbeing Plan reflects the equality issues identified in the Strategic Equality Plans of all the partners.
- 4.7. The Well-being Plan has four cross cutting themes of: Poverty, **Equality**, Climate Change and Welsh Language. This will help guide the PSB to consider equality in all of the work to deliver on the Well-being Plan, and equality is a guiding principle of the PSB as a partnership.
- 4.8. The PSB have published an Annual Report for 2018-19 which is available here:

[Wrexham Public Service Board Annual Report 2018-19](#)

5. **Equality leads, champions and networks**

- 5.1. The Lead Member for People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty has the lead role in promoting and overseeing the Council's work on equality and diversity. Strategic support in 2018-19 was provided by the Head of Finance. The Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee have received monitoring reports and the Council's Executive Board are responsible for formally approving the annual SEP update report.
- 5.2. The Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team provided support to mainstream equality and diversity across the Council, with the assistance of the Equality Improvement Group [EIG].

6. **Internal delivery and monitoring processes**

- 6.1. **Delivery** of the Strategic Equality Plan is achieved through our existing Council and departmental strategies and plans. The Council Plan is the Council's overarching strategy. It sets out the seven planning principles that will be considered in the planning and provision of all Council services:
- **Prevention** comes first
 - Prioritise the most **vulnerable**
 - Plan for the **long term**
 - Consult and **involve** local people
 - **Integrate** services
 - **Collaborate** services
 - Services and information should be equally available in **Welsh** and English

- 6.2. The Plan also sets out three strategic well-being themes that the Council will work towards:
- **Economy** – supporting a sustainable, thriving and more equal economy
 - **People** – supporting sustainable, active and self-reliant communities whilst safeguarding those at risk
 - **Place** – supporting a sustainable and bio-diverse environment
- 6.3. These are underpinned by a fourth, corporate well-being theme of '**Organisation** – building an efficient and effective organisation that can best support local well-being'.
- 6.4. The well-being themes are described in detail in the current [Council Plan](#) together with a high level summary of the actions and activities that the Council will undertake to improve local well-being, and the measures and targets that will be used to judge progress.
- 6.5. A new Council Plan covering the period 2020-2023 is currently being drafted and consulted upon ready for implementation on 31 May 2020. The objectives within the new Strategic Equality Plan (2020-2024) will form part of the new Council Plan.
- 6.6. The approach to equality in Wrexham has been one of mainstreaming across everything that we do. We know that the way that services are planned and delivered can impact differently on different groups of people, therefore we monitor and consider the impact of services on people with different protected characteristics to promote fair and equitable outcomes. By mainstreaming equality considerations across Council and departmental strategies, plans and service proposals we can identify where discrimination could potentially occur in the delivery of our services and take steps to mitigate it.
- 6.7. The purpose of our equality monitoring is to better understand who is, and who is not accessing our services as well as establishing what people need from services. This information will help us to target resources where they are needed most; prioritising the most vulnerable in our communities. Equality information can be found at **Appendix 1c**. Improving equality monitoring across our workforce and services including schools remains a key area of development for the 2019-2020 period.

7. Progress against the general duty under the Equality Act 2010

- 7.1. A range of activities were taken forward in relation to each of the general duties during 2018-2019. These included, for example:
- 7.2. **Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation:**

- There were 165 reported hate crimes in Wrexham during the period 2017-18. This increased to 221 hate crime reports in 2018-19. The number of recorded hate crimes is steadily increasing.
- The Regional Tactical Hate Crime Group, introduced in 2018, continues to meet. The group have considered data at a North Wales and Wrexham town/ rural level;
- A package of materials was provided by the Community Cohesion Coordinator for Hate Crime Awareness week and this was shared with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network [NWPSSEN];
- The new Regional Cohesion Team will be undertaking a community tension mapping exercise. In the interim period, a small number of partnership actions have been drafted to maintain the momentum around hate crime work;
- Initial discussions have taken place regarding the existing processes for community tension monitoring. The new Regional Cohesion Team will be taking this work forward, including helping the local authority and partner agencies to plan for any potential increase in community tensions as a result of Brexit;
- The Community Safety Team continue to prioritise tackling anti-social behaviour;
- Following the release of new Home Office guidance and associated training on self-assessing the Prevent Duty, a Prevent Self-Assessment has been completed for the local authority;
- A number of recommendations for Partnership Action have been identified as part of the Prevent Self-Assessment which will be implemented by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP);
- The Council have committed to specific actions in relation to Modern Slavery, which have been informed by the Regional Modern Slavery Group action plan. The actions are incorporated within the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group action plan;
- A desktop review of Wrexham's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) partner positions in relation to modern slavery was undertaken and discussed at a Community Safety Partnership meeting in October 2018. A small number of recommended partnership actions have been drafted as a result of the review. These actions are in addition to partners' own internal Modern Slavery Duty responsibilities;
- The Council joined Bawso (a third sector organisation providing specialist services for BME services) at an awareness raising stall in Ty Pawb on White Ribbon Day in 2018, to promote awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- Bawso continue to provide specialist support to victims and Black & Ethnic minority groups in Wrexham around issues relating to domestic abuse, genital mutilation and human trafficking;
- Development of a regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Team is ongoing;

- The Council attended and promoted Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2018;
- The Council recognised and promoted Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History month;
- The Council recognised and promoted LGBT History month in 2018;

- The Council recognised and promoted Refugee week in 2018.
- The Council continues to develop support for asylum seekers and refugees as part of the Home Office resettlement programme. This includes:
 - Ensuring ongoing support and integration for arriving families/individuals;
 - Developing a myths and facts information sheet for local authority officers;
 - Working with LA staff, police and partners to manage and mitigate against potential / actual community tensions arising from migration issues;
 - Representation on the National Syrian Resettlement LA group with Wales Migration Partnership, the Home Office and Welsh Government.

7.3. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not:

- The Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team continue to develop a range of guidance and briefing documents in relation to Equality and Diversity e.g. equality monitoring guidance;
- Our customers can choose to conduct their business with the Council in English or in Welsh. For customers who need to communicate with us in other languages we can arrange a telephone interpreter. In addition, we can offer a range of face-to-face communication support such as British Sign Language interpreters;
- Our website has a range of tools to improve accessibility including the ability to listen to pages on our website using Dixerit Plus;
- Bespoke packages of support which promote wellbeing continue to be delivered for gypsy traveller pupils, in order to bridge the gap between school and home to enhance parental engagement;
- Recent Outreach Worker appointments through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme funded by the Home Office has promoted inclusion and wellbeing for refugees and asylum seekers by working with the wider community, as well as targeted schools;
- The Governor Support Team is working to encourage a diverse range of people to become school governors;

- As part of the Welsh Government's Play Sufficiency Duty, specific consideration is given to children who may experience barriers in access to play beyond those reported by most other children, with particular attention paid to the play needs of disabled children, looked after children, young carers, children from traveller families and those from other minority ethnic groups;
- The Info Shop and Outreach services are a significant strength in provision for very vulnerable young people, as well as providing universal services for improving well-being;
- The Participation Strategy for children and young people has been approved. A self-assessment tool has been developed and an e-learning module for associate pupil governors has been implemented and promoted via the Participation Team;
- The Participation Team effectively facilitates work across both the statutory and voluntary sector, providing training and development opportunities for young people and professionals;
- The local authority strongly promotes equality and inclusion through partnerships with organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card and Stonewall Cymru.

7.4. Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not:

- The Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team and Equality Improvement Group continues to work to embed the Equality Impact Assessment process across Wrexham County Borough Council;
- The Council recognised and promoted awareness of International Women's Day which saw young women from throughout the county shadowing women in public service and political roles;
- The Education & Early Intervention Department is a member of the Wrexham Adult Community Learning Partnership which prioritises English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL);
- The Together in Wrexham programme encourages volunteering through its grant assessment criteria;
- The Council continues to work to increase the diversity of tenants engaging in participation. The Tenants Forum and training programme are ongoing as part of the Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy (2018-20) and its associated action plan.

8. Progress against the specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011

- 8.1. Details of progress against each of the specific requirements under the Wales Regulations, including Employee Equality Monitoring, are provided in this report.
- 8.2. Effective monitoring of the SEP has been limited because there continues to be a focus on processes and outputs rather than on outcomes. It is planned to review the approach with a view to introducing an outcome focused approach during the review

of the Strategic Equality Plan which will take place during 2019-2020. We will aim to address this by:

- Encouraging equality outcomes to be explicitly identified in departmental Service Plans and linked to the Council Plan;
- Increased alignment of needs assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation with Corporate Performance;
- Encouraging the use of performance management systems, where appropriate, to further link the corporate, departmental and equality processes.

8.3. Within the Strategic Equality Plan performance management structure from April 2020 we aim to further address this by:

- Agreeing outcome focused Strategic Equality Objectives (outcomes);
- Agreeing key performance indicators for each high level outcome;
- Agreeing key performance measures for identified actions within the plan.

9. Engagement

9.1. Departments across the Council record and monitor the profile of customers accessing their services. The process for this is not consistent across the Council. A number of resources have been developed to support improvements:

9.2. In 2018, the Council adopted its new 'Involvement Strategy'; the vision of which is that all people have the information they need to influence the planning and delivery of services. They are engaged and consulted with on decisions which affect them, and where possible we work together to design and deliver services.

[Wrexham Council's Involvement Strategy](#)

9.3. Involvement is one of the Council's key planning in line with the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Therefore, the new Involvement Strategy will focus on three areas of involvement: Consultation, Engagement and Co-production and continue to ensure equality of access and service across all customer groups. A number of guidance documents have been developed by the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network, of which Wrexham County Borough Council is a member, including:

- Top Ten Tips Equality Impact Assessments and Due Regard;
- Top Ten Tips for Equality Monitoring;
- Top Ten Tips for Accessible Events.

9.4. A range of data sources are used by the Council. These include Office for National Statistics, [Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Statistics](#), NOMIS, Infobase

Cymru, Stats Wales, regional and national research and reports. The Council also uses Your Voice Wrexham, an online engagement hub which is owned by Wrexham Public Services Board [PSB]. This provides a co-ordinated approach to consultation and engagement across all PSB partner organisations in Wrexham. [Link to Your Voice Wrexham online engagement hub for consultation with the public](#)

- 9.5. Some communities with protected characteristics have relatively small populations and therefore statistical analysis can be very difficult. However, where key differences in responses are indicated by particular groups, these are highlighted in findings and presented to decision-makers. The Council may also use national and regional research in order to better understand the issues in relation to these groups of people.
- 9.6. The Council circulates opportunities for engagement as widely as possible, and where appropriate, will try to engage particular groups through existing and established fora/networks, such as:
- Wrexham Islamic Cultural Association
 - BAWSO
 - North Wales Regional Public Sector Equality Network
 - Wrexham VI Voices
 - Wrexham Over 50's Forum
 - Wrexham Senedd Yr Ifanc (Young People's Parliament)
 - School Councils
 - Portuguese Community Group
 - Unique Transgender Group
 - VIVA LGBT
 - Trans Positivity Wrexham
 - Tangnefedd (North East Wales Interfaith Forum)
 - Association of Voluntary Groups in Wrexham (AVOW) and its member organisations
- 9.7. In order to support our Equality Impact Assessment process, we will consider ways that we can further increase the understanding of potential impacts for protected groups through engagement with stakeholders, for example, an equality reference group.
- 9.8. We also recognise that engagement with our workforce is important. The Human Resources & Organisation Development Team in the Corporate and Customer Services Department uses various groups, e.g. Virtual policy group, employee forum, Senior Leadership Team, Senior Managers group, when feedback is required for workforce policy development/changes. We also consult with the recognised Trade Unions who are representing the wider workforce.

10. Using information to meet the general duty

- 10.1. Departments are encouraged to use service data to understand the profile of their customers and potential customers. Census data may also be used to identify under or over representation of groups with protected characteristics within specific service areas. This supports departments to be able to agree actions and set targets.
- 10.2. Analysis of satisfaction rates and complaints helps to identify areas of potential discrimination and proactively address potential community tensions e.g.
 - Customer services surveys include equality monitoring;
 - Analysis of customer complaints by departments identifies potential areas of discrimination which are then addressed; and
 - Potential community tensions are collected, reviewed and addressed through co-ordinated action with local community safety partners.
- 10.3. Information gained through Equality Impact Assessments is used to inform service developments. Further work is needed to share this information across departments.

11. Wrexham Council Employees

- 11.1. The term “equality monitoring” describes the process used to gather, store, and analyse this information, which is used to improve our services, policies and procedures.
- 11.2. Employment Equality Monitoring Reports are published annually and show comparisons over 3 years. The reports are available here:
[Employment equality monitoring reports](#)

The most up to date publication, now includes the gender pay gap and has also been published in open format, which was a requirement of Welsh Government. The report provides information on the various protected characteristics we are able to report on and other policies and practices that have made a positive contribution to the equality agenda. The data relates to individuals directly employed by the Council.

- 11.3. The Council will be reporting on the following, where current systems will allow;
 - Employees of the Council on 31 March annually by protected characteristic
 - Male and female employees, broken down by:
 - job
 - grade
 - pay
 - contract type
 - working pattern
 - Applicants for jobs with the Council over the last year by protected characteristic;
 - Employees who have applied to change position within the Council, identifying how many were successful in their application and how many were not by protected

characteristic;

- Employees who have applied for training and how many succeeded in their application by protected characteristic;
- Employees who completed the training by protected characteristic;
- Employees involved in grievance procedures either as complainant or as a person against whom a complaint was made by protected characteristic;
- Employees subject to disciplinary procedures by protected characteristic; and
- Employees who have left the Council's employment by protected characteristic.

- 11.4. A key priority identified within our Strategic Equality Plan was the need to improve our workforce equality monitoring in order to better target actions to promote workforce diversity. To address this area for improvement an action to improve the way we capture this data was included within the Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy and associated action plan. We have expanded our self-service facility and the facility for employees to self-report this equality monitoring data online is now possible in our 'My View' system. This aims to improve the quantity and quality of workforce monitoring information held which can then enable improved analysis and targeting of actions. This year as a result of the work with Welsh Government to publish 'open' spreadsheets on equality data we are enabling easier access and making data more accessible.
- 11.5. Diversity is important because it helps the Council to maintain a workforce that has a wide range of skills, qualifications and experiences. We are committed to ensuring that all our employment policies and practices for employees are fair, advance equality of outcome, eliminate discrimination and foster good employee relations. As a public authority the Council is committed to take steps to promote equality of opportunity and combat discrimination and to gather information about employees regarding their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership.
- 11.6. These reports monitor the workforce and potential workforce and this information is used to review the effectiveness of our employment policies and practices and to consider whether there has been any potential lack of fairness or even discrimination. Data which indicates there may be potential for lack of fairness or discrimination in the application of a policy or practice is investigated in more depth and if necessary, remedial action is taken to remove it by reviewing the relevant policy or practice. We review all our policies periodically and carry out Equality Impact Assessments where this is relevant.
- 11.7. We use employment monitoring information to help us identify any key equality issues which require specific action; whether our workforce reflects the local community; to measure progress year on year; to identify possible steps to further advance equality or foster good relations and when undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. We have taken steps to improve data capture on equality monitoring for our staff, whilst accepting that we have to respect that not all employees wish to

provide this personal or sensitive information. We believe that it is important to give employees the opportunity to be counted if they wish. Both the paper application form (now only used for accessible reasons) and online application form provide an explanation as to why equality monitoring data is collected and how it will be used, providing reassurances around the Data Protection Act and confidentiality. Applicants are required to complete our equality monitoring form as part of e-recruitment as that section is mandatory, although most fields allow staff to state: “prefer not to say”.

12. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

- 12.1. The online EIA process has been developed in collaboration with the Equality Improvement Group. This includes a combined screening and assessment tool. Key features include:
- EIA identification numbers which also reference the authoring department;
 - Intuitive design that has eliminated the need for training on completing the form;
 - Format includes the identification of positive impacts as well as potential negative ones;
 - Format enables electronic links to relevant consultation and other documents;
 - Integral review process for updating EIAs following implementation of decisions;
 - EIA summary information is a mandatory part of all Scrutiny Committee and Executive Board reports; and
 - EIAs can be accessed electronically by Elected Members.
 - The Council’s approach to Equality Impact Assessments is to include groups of people which are specifically listed as having ‘protected characteristics’:
 - Age;
 - Disability;
 - Gender reassignment;
 - Race;
 - Religion and Belief;
 - Sex;
 - Sexual orientation;
 - Marriage and Civil Partnership; and
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
- 12.2. In addition, we recognise that individuals and communities are under increased pressure because of caring responsibilities, the economic environment in the UK, changes to the Benefits system, and expected reductions in public, voluntary and community services. Therefore within our local EIA system we also consider as additional characteristics for the purposes of Equality Impact Assessments:

- Poverty;
- Caring; and
- Welsh Language

- 12.3. By taking a wider view of the protected characteristics we encourage a more holistic approach to the needs of all communities in designing or delivering our services.
- 12.4. To assist the EIA process a series of 'This is Wrexham' data sheets have previously been developed in collaboration with the EIG and the Performance, Improvement and Partnerships team [PIPS]. There is one sheet for each protected characteristic plus Carers, Welsh Language and Poverty. In addition, a census analysis sheet has been prepared to assist departments in analysing service user data in relation to each of the protected groups.
- 12.5. Corporate consultations request equality information from respondents and are analysed by protected characteristics groups to ensure that any specific data / opinions from these groups are reported to decision makers and included in Equality Impact Assessments.

13. Quality Assurance Process:

- 13.1. As part of the internal quality assurance process, members of the Equality Improvement Group [EIG] have developed internal quality assessment criteria for Equality Impact Assessments [EIAs].
- 13.2. Members of the EIG review a sample of departmental EIAs on an annual basis against criteria previously agreed by the group. The basis for the assessment criteria is the legal duty to demonstrate 'due regard'. The findings of the EIA quality assurance review has indicated that overall:
- Evidence that EIAs are being routinely entered onto the online system;
 - There is evidence that EIAs are generally being undertaken in a more timely way and are being appropriately delegated;
 - There are examples where consultation has taken place, informing the EIA, however further development is required for this to be consistent across all EIAs;
 - All budget related decisions were subject to an EIA;
 - The process for publishing EIAs as part of Executive Board and Committee reports is working well.
- 13.3. In addition, the internal quality assurance procedure has identified a number of opportunities for continued improvement including:
- Improving the quality of EIA Screening as an integral and mandatory part of the EIA;

- Further development of consistency in the timeliness of beginning an EIA;
- Promote greater understanding of equality and diversity across the protected characteristics;
- Improving the use of routine service level equality focused monitoring data to inform service provision, Equality Impact Assessments and associated decision making;
- Improving the use of the follow up function within the EIA tool to consider the realised, unrealised or unintended impacts upon implementation of a proposal; and
- Improving the completeness of consultation evidence information, so where good consultation has been undertaken, this is detailed within the EIA.

These improvements will continue to be progressed via the Senior Leadership Team [SLT] and the Equality Improvement Group [EIG].

13.4 The Equality and Human Rights Committee [EHRC] guidance on EIAs states that public organisations should have internal systems to ensure EIAs are happening, are of a sufficient quality and that such mechanisms are proportionate to the public authority's size and resources, and are supported at senior levels. Progress against the EHRC guidance is outlined below:

| EHRC Guidance | WCBC Procedure – 2018-2019 position |
|---|---|
| Identify relevant person, unit or team to support the authority's work on equality (and specifically EIAs) | Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team Equality Improvement Group Departmental Senior Management |
| Dedicated equality officer to coordinate and provide advice (or identified an existing staff member who already has responsibility for coordinating activity) | PIPs Manager (Corporate), Senior Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Officer. |
| Introduce a standing agenda item for their board on EIAs and the duties more broadly | Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee. Executive Board annual report Feedback to the Senior Leadership Team and to Departmental Senior Management teams |
| Convene an internal working group, chaired by a member of the senior management team, with representation from each department or directorate to monitor organisation-wide progress on EIAs and wider duties performance. | Equality Improvement Group |

| EHRC Guidance | WCBC Procedure – 2018-2019 position |
|--|---|
| Carry out spot checks on a sample of EIAs in order to test the quality of the assessments. | A Quality Assurance procedure has been developed with guidance from the EIG and Internal Audit: EIG members to undertake assessments once a year; Review to be undertaken in order to inform Annual Equality Report, Service Planning and the Annual Governance Statement; and EIG to consider and challenge a selection of assessments; overview report to be prepared for Senior Leadership Team to take forward |
| EIA templates adapted to include a sign-off | Online EIAs are electronically linked to their authoring department. |
| Ensure that relevant policies and EIAs are signed off by equality leads and a member of senior management, | Delegated authority from Chief Officers to officers completing individual EIAs. Internal Assurance Statements. Chief Officer's control. Executive Board / decision making boards |
| Introduce a 'critical friends' panel of local senior-level experts to provide a robust challenge to officers regarding EIAs. | Equality Improvement Group. We are considering ways that we can further increase the understanding of potential impacts for protected groups through engagement with stakeholders. |

14. Compliance

14.1 The responsibility for carrying out EIAs rests with Chief Officers and they should put in place systems to ensure that this is done. As they are a key element of the governance framework, the Council's equality arrangements will be subject to regular, but not necessarily annual, audits which will provide independent assurance on the effectiveness of the controls put in place by the Chief Officer. Such audits may include compliance checks on EIAs, but this will be dependent on an Internal Audit assessment of risk at the commencement of the audit. The results of the audit will be reported to the relevant Chief Officer, Senior Leadership Team and the Audit Committee. The Internal Audit Section provides guidance to assist the Council and Chief Officers in ensuring that there are effective internal controls in place in relation to equality and diversity.

15. Equality Impact Assessment of Budget Proposals 2018-19

15.1 The Council is keen to ensure that equality and diversity is built into the budget setting process in order to minimise any detrimental impact on front line services, vulnerable people and people with protected characteristics.

15.2 The 2018-19 budget was opened up to public consultation through online and hard copy surveys. Information gained from this process informed budget proposals and helped the Council listen to our citizens in order to more effectively target resources.

15.3 EIAs were completed on all the budget proposals for 2018/19 and are published on the Council's website.

16. Training and Awareness Raising

16.1 It is acknowledged that further work is needed to ensure all members of Council staff understand their responsibilities in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

16.2 During 2018-19 some specific training and awareness raising has been provided:

- A number of staff both internally and externally have undertaken training and awareness sessions on Modern Slavery, Prevent and Community Tensions;
- Hate crime training has been delivered to staff across the Council and externally with partners;
- A training session for school governors which focused on meeting the needs of vulnerable learners has been held;
- The Cat's Paw Theatre Company continues to visit schools across Wrexham to deliver awareness raising sessions in relation to sexual consent and healthy relationships;
- Workforce Development have delivered deaf awareness sessions and British Sign Language sessions for staff;
- The Council continues to deliver mandatory domestic abuse training to all staff. Additional specialist training has been offered to social workers.

16.3 In addition to this training, diversity and equality is included within the:

- Induction workshops for all new elected members; and
- Equality awareness raising for all elected members within the Member development programme.

16.4 Furthermore, the Adult and Children Social Care Department's training programme includes:

- E-learning modules Equality in the Workplace and the Equality Act 2010.

- Reference to the Council's commitment to equality and the relevant policies and procedures in all contracts with external training providers;
- The principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014;
- The core values within the Social Care Training programme and Code of Professional Practice, which are to respect the views and wishes and promote the rights and interests of individuals and to establish trust and confidence of individuals and promote their well-being, voice and control;
- Promotion of the Social Care Wales Social Care Induction Framework which aims to embed a sound value base and promotes equality and diversity of individuals in receipt of services;
- Implementation of the Social Care Wales Code of Professional Practice for Social Care which sets the standard for social care workers ensuring they promote the rights, interests and wishes of individuals and carers, and ensure their actions promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
- The requirement for all Social Care workers and managers who undertake Health and Social Care qualifications to demonstrate understanding of equality issues;
- Welsh Language training which is available to Council employees and the wider social care sector;
- Training on equality matters such as best practice in dementia, safeguarding, trans awareness and trans equality, LGBTQ young people, person centered practice and outcome focused practice.

16.5 Individual staff performance monitoring is achieved through the Performance (PRD) process. Annual work related objectives are set for all members of staff and these are reviewed six monthly. Equality objectives are a mandatory section of the PRD template. This will help us to progress our corporate equality objectives and to identify training needs. Further monitoring and analysis is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.

16.6 Although equality and diversity training and awareness sessions have made a positive contribution towards ensuring that the Council meets its statutory duties, we recognise that further work is needed to promote greater understanding of the duties across all staff groups. To support this mainstreaming approach a number of e-learning packages have been developed:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Equality in the workplace;
- Equality Impact Assessments;
- Tackling Hate Crime;
- Prevent Duty;
- Community Tension Monitoring.

16.7 These have been designed to reflect the Council's statutory equality duties and are available to all staff that have access to a computer. Separately a PowerPoint

training modules covering these equality responsibilities has been developed for use by managers with peripatetic staff e.g. Street Scene.

- 16.8 Departmental training needs in relation to equality and diversity are collated by members of the EIG. Further promotion of the available packages and a review of those that are mandatory will be undertaken during 2019-20 period.
- 16.9 Finally, where training needs are identified through the year through feedback or observation, collaboration between the Performance, Improvement and Partnerships Team and Workforce Development Team takes place to ensure that where appropriate provision is sourced.

17. Procurement

- 17.1 Details of how equality is embedded into the procurement process are set out in the SEP. In brief, the Council has adopted the 'SQuID' (Supplier Qualification Information Database) model for public procurement introduced by the Welsh Government. This approach aims to deliver a number of benefits related to promoting equality and diversity by asking a number of key questions including:
- Have any of the following circumstances applied to your organisation in the last three years? - A finding of unlawful discrimination by an Employment Tribunal, an Employment Appeal Tribunal or any other court or tribunal (or comparable proceedings)?. If yes, provide a summary of the findings or judgement and explain what action you have taken to prevent similar circumstances from recurring.
 - If you use sub-contractor(s), what processes do you have in place to check whether any of the above circumstances apply to them?
 - Do your staff with management responsibilities receive equality training?
 - Do your staff with service delivery responsibilities receive equality training?
- 17.2 Guidance on equality is available from the Council's Commissioning Procurement and Contract Management Unit with best practice information being made available in accordance with that developed via the Welsh Government's Procurement Route Planner. In addition, contract specifications and contracts contain specific equality clauses relating to the Council's equality objectives and legal duties as relevant and proportionate to the contract. The Commissioning Procurement and Contract Management Strategy promotes commissioning processes that actively involve people with protected characteristics in the commissioning and co-production of services.
- 17.3 The WG Ethical Code is a key principle of the Council's new Commissioning Procurement and Contract Management Strategy 2018-2021. It is adopted to ensure the Council adopts practices that help to eradicate unlawful and unethical employment practices and to ensure all workers at every stage of the supply chain

are treated fairly.

18. Conclusion and key actions for 2019-2020

- 18.1 This report outlines the progress made so far in implementing the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and in meeting both its specific and general equality duties.
- 18.2 Whilst good progress has been made, there is much that remains to be done. In addition to the objectives already contained in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20, during 2019-20 we will also:
- Continue to mainstream the equality agenda across the Council;
 - Continue to embed the corporate equality objectives within departmental service plans;
 - Continue to support and enable departments to meet the corporate equality objectives;
 - Continue to support and enable Syrian refugees to resettle in Wrexham as part of the Council's humanitarian support for people in extreme need;
 - Continue to support the regional co-ordination of activities to tackle discrimination and foster good relations in relation to Prevent and Modern Slavery;
 - Continue to support the work of the North Wales Hate Crime tactical group;
 - Continue to support improvements in the quality of equality monitoring and analysis;
 - Continue to improve the quality of Equality Impact Assessments;
 - Continue to share knowledge of equality and diversity across the organisation;
 - Continue to support staff to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the public sector equality duties;
 - Develop a survey to establish a baseline in terms of Members' understanding and use of the EIA toolkit and use this to inform further Member training;
 - Continue to develop the equality training plan via e-learning and face-to-face sessions;
 - Continue to deliver services that meet the needs of our customers.
- 18.3 A key priority during 2019-20 will be to further improve the use of performance data to inform the development and monitoring of our next set of Strategic Equality Objectives in the 2020-2024 Strategic Equality Plan. The process to review and agree revised strategic equality objectives began in 2019. The new objectives in the 2020-2024 SEP will take effect from April 2020.

Thank you for reading our Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2018-19.

Your views and suggestions for our annual report are welcome. Please contact us on: Telephone: 01978 292271 Email: telluswhatyouthink@wrexham.gov.uk

19. Appendices

- 1a. Equality objectives that underpin the current Council Plan, the Wrexham PSB Plan and achievement of the Welsh Government national Well-being Goals
- 1b. Strategic Equality Action Plan 2016-20: Progress update 2018-19
- 1c. Equality Monitoring Information 2018-19
- 1d. Glossary of terms

Equality objectives that underpin the current Council Plan, the Wrexham PSB Plan and achievement of the Welsh Government national Well-being Goals.

| <p>Welsh Government Wellbeing Goals / Wrexham PSB Plan</p> | <p>Council Plan - themes</p> | <p>Council Plan - priority outcomes</p> | <p>Equality Objectives</p> |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>A prosperous Wales / Wrexham</p> | <p>Economy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People want to live, work, learn and invest here • Businesses can locate and grow here • People can prosper as individuals in their communities | <p>Reduce inequalities in employment and pay</p> |
| <p>A healthier Wales / Wrexham</p> <p>A Wales / Wrexham of cohesive communities</p> <p>A Wales / Wrexham of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p> | <p>People</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children and young people have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential • Children and young people are safeguarded • People feel, and are, safe and secure • All people are enabled to make healthy choices • All vulnerable older people are safe, have optimal health, independence and well-being • Welsh language and culture is promoted and supported | <p>Reduce inequalities in health</p> <p>Reduce inequalities in education</p> <p>Reduce inequalities in personal safety</p> <p>Reduce inequalities in representation and voice</p> |

| Welsh Government Wellbeing Goals / Wrexham PSB Plan | Council Plan - themes | Council Plan - priority outcomes | Equality Objectives |
|--|-----------------------|--|--|
| <p>A resilient Wales / Wrexham</p> <p>A globally responsible Wales / Wrexham</p> | <p>Place</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes that meet people's needs and aspirations • An environmentally responsible place • Communities with sustainable, attractive settlements, neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces • Well connected communities | <p>Reduce inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment</p> |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| <p><u>5 ways of working:</u></p> <p>Long term</p> <p>Prevention</p> | <p>Organisation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged and satisfied customers • Creating the conditions for success | <p>Promote equality in terms of outcomes to be achieved</p> <p>Develop a more strategic approach to the collection and use</p> |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Integration</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Involvement</p> | <p>Organisation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged and satisfied customers • Creating the conditions for success | <p>of equality data</p> <p>Improve workforce monitoring across protected characteristics</p> <p>Review and enhance employment policies to address under-representation and any barriers to accessing employment</p> <p>Raise awareness of the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to procurement to ensure that contract monitoring is undertaken</p> |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|

**Wrexham Strategic Equality Plan action plan 2016-20. Progress update
2018-19:**

Wrexham's Equality Objectives are outlined in the current Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020). The 2016-2020 objectives are as follows:

- Reduce inequalities in employment and pay
- Reduce inequalities in health
- Reduce inequalities in education
- Reduce inequalities in personal safety
- Reduce inequalities in representation and voice
- Reduce inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment

This document gives some examples of how the Council has contributed to each equality objective. We recognise that this self-assessment is limited because it does not include a robust assessment by Wrexham people and further work is required to develop the performance monitoring of the Strategic Equality Plan moving forward. This is being reviewed as part of the development of the new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

Within each equality objective a number of specific needs have been identified and actions to address these have been developed. Delivery against the objectives is driven through the SEP action plan, key departmental strategies and plans and service business plans. The key mechanisms for delivery are outlined within the SEP and **Appendix 1**.

Here are some examples of the actions we have undertaken during the fourth year of our current Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020.

Strategic Objective 1: Reduce inequalities in employment and pay

North Wales Public Sector Equality Network research and consultation concluded the need to:

- Identify and address inequality within recruitment, retention, training and promotion processes; and
- Identify and address any pay gaps between people with different protected characteristics.

What we said we would do:

To make a positive difference to inequality in employment and pay we will:

- Implement and deliver on the Economic Prosperity Strategy, the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- As part of national pay arrangements, in 2019 the Council significantly increased the pay scales of its lowest paid employees, who are disproportionately female.
- HR and Organisational Development use the GLPC Job Evaluation (JE) scheme to provide consistent job evaluation of roles which determines grades. Officers are JE trained and experienced in evaluations and the process of JE uses consistency checking to maintain quality / integrity of the JE scheme.
- The pay structure has recently been revised in line with national changes and revised pay scales implemented, this included an Equality Impact Assessment.
- The Council reports gender pay gap information annually in line with requests from the Welsh Government.
- Council Services (with advice from HR and Organisational Development) continue, where possible, to work with partner organisations to attract and retain people with protected characteristics.
- The Council continues to provide advice, guidance and training to promote diversity. A number of e-learning packages are available for staff, including The Equality Act

2010 and Equality in the Workplace. E-learning modules are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up to date.

- The values within the Social Care Wales Code of Professional Practice are embedded in all of the Council's social care training courses and qualifications. These promote equality, diversity and wellbeing of individuals and carers.
- Managers across the Council are advised of the impact of shorter-term positions. Advice is also provided to managers about support for pregnant employees, including maternity risk assessments and advice for restructures affecting pregnant employees or those on maternity leave to ensure that employees are protected in line with legislation.
- Managers across the Council are supported to make recruitment decisions. Members are trained on recruitment processes and objective decision making prior to undertaking senior management recruitment. A project to implement online applications is underway and this will improve access via online job applications.
- HR and Organisational Development will continue to advertise vacancies through JCP and work with them on recruitment events and at jobs fairs, where possible.
- The Welsh Government's Ethical Code is a key principle of the Council's new Commissioning Procurement and Contract Management Strategy 2018-2021. It is adopted to ensure the Council adopts practices that help to eradicate unlawful and unethical employment practices and to ensure all workers at every stage of the supply chain are treated fairly.
- HR and Organisational Development continue to work with the Health and Safety Team to promote health & safety at work and the access to work fund. A "Reasonable Adjustment Guide" is available which enables managers to fully understand the different types of reasonable adjustment and access to work funding.
- The Council has a Work-life Balance and flexible working policy which provides flexibility for employees.
- Self-service modules on the 'My View' system are now live and can be used by employees to update their own diversity / equality data.
- The "Together in Wrexham" programme encourages volunteering through its grant assessment criteria.
- The Council Plan (2018-20) includes measures in relation to volunteering in communities to increase the profile of these activities and to highlight the worth of volunteering to Council services.
- The Public Service Board have committed to a county-wide volunteering programme that commits members to offering staff time to volunteer for the benefit of Wrexham and enhance opportunities for people to learn and develop.
- The Modern Apprenticeship (MA) pilot delivered by Workforce Development has now been completed. This MA project supported participants who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) to gain work placements and

qualifications in the care sector. This is a partnership between Clwyd Alyn Housing and the Council. The support / care workers in the extra care housing programme are employed by the Council with several vacancies filled by candidates who were furthest from the labour market, and some who had had little previous employment.

- Through the Communities for Work Programme, we continue to assist people into work to address long-term unemployment.
- The Performance, Improvement and Partnerships team continue to promote agile working to encourage flexible working across the Council.
- The Customer Services Team, routinely consults with Coleg Cambria to review workforce development opportunities, for example, traineeship or modern apprenticeship opportunities for young people.

Strategic Objective 2: Reduce inequalities in Health

North Wales Public Sector Equality Network research and consultation concluded the need to:

- Increase the number of people in under-represented groups choosing healthy lifestyles
- Increase the number of people in under-represented groups accessing health care services;
- Improve the care of people to ensure they are treated with dignity and respect, particularly older people and vulnerable people;
- Increase the uptake of preventative health care services by Gypsies and Travellers;
- Ensure that Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual and Transgender people are treated with dignity and respect when receiving care; and
- Ensure that the rights and aspirations of people with Mental Health issues and Learning Disabilities are better addressed.

What said we would do:

To make a positive difference to reducing inequality in health we will:

- Implement Wrexham Public Service Board Well-being Plan; the Anti-Poverty Strategy; and the Council's Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy;
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- The Council has have made a firm commitment to support the health and well-being of our staff by maintaining the Gold Corporate Health Standard, implementing initiatives that support good mental well-being and physical well-being.
- The Council has trained and continues to support our mental health first aiders. We have in place a 24 / 7 employee assistance scheme where employees can call to discuss all areas of their life, including their mental health. We are delivering on an action plan to meet our requirements of the "Time to Change" mental health pledge in order to provide support and challenge perceptions in this area.
- The Council provides information and support to staff and the public through our well-being days and have an online resource for staff detailing our well-being

activities and links to external support. We deliver an employee reward scheme with a number of elements that support health and well-being such as gym membership and a cycle to work scheme. We have staff led lunchtime walking groups.

- The Council encourages managers to recognise signs of stress, promote employees taking annual leave, flexitime, lunch breaks. We encourage managers to implement phased return / reasonable adjustments for employees returning to work after a period of sickness absence. Redeployment of employees is also arranged wherever possible to support return to work or accommodate health and wellbeing.
- The Council has worked well to implement the Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act in the Social Care Department (Adults and Children's). Detailed modules were designed to support roles most affected by the Act. The four modules: Prevention; Assessing & Meeting the Needs of Individuals; Looked After & Accommodated Children; and Safeguarding were launched in January 2016. Training packs and resources are available on the Care Council (CCW) Information Hub. [Care Council for Wales information hub](#)
- The Council also offers a wide suite of training for staff which encompasses the health and wellbeing and equality agenda.
- Corporate Health & Safety provide advice and guidance on service related health and safety issues affecting people from some of the protected characteristic groups (age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief). All Health & Safety risk assessments should take account of people with protected characteristics if this means they could face different or greater risks. In the last 12 months specific work has included:
 - Work with Community Living Service and Recovery Service on fire safety in supported living properties;
 - Advice to school based youth worker and her manager on workplace adaptations (visual impairment);
 - Display screen equipment assessments for a number of staff with disabilities;
 - New and expectant mother risk assessments;
 - Return to work Health & Safety advice for staff who have had long term absence due to health;
 - Hand arm vibration advice for services where adults or young people with disabilities may use powered tools.
- Nearly all secondary schools participate in the School Health Research Network. The Healthy Schools team works proactively with schools to develop action plans to address identified themes.
- The percentage of children and young people who are 'Hooked on Sport' increased from 43% (2015) to 44% (2018), moving closer to the Welsh average of 48%. 67% of Wrexham pupils participated at least once in extracurricular sport in the 2017/18 school year. This compares well with a national participation rate of 66%.
- The Info Shop and Outreach services is a significant strength in provision for very vulnerable young people as well as providing universal services for improving well-

being. The number accessing the provision remains high at 13,133 in 2018-19 up from 12,273 in 2017-18. 98% of service users rated the service 4/5.

- Counselling services are given a high priority in Wrexham with 617 young people receiving counselling in 2018-19. This is an increase from 474 in 2017-18.
- Wrexham Family Information Service (WFIS) worked closely with the Wrexham First 1000 Days Project, designing and printing new leaflets with a focus on the First 1000 Days. The leaflets are aimed at pregnant women and services working with pregnant women and their families, to promote the message of booking in with the midwife as the first point of contact, and by 10 weeks. They also promote the information and advice services that they can offer to pregnant women and families.
- Partners in the Wrexham First 1000 Days Project have now established stronger links with Midwifery and Health Visitors. These services will refer expectant parents into the Wrexham Family Information Service via a new 'quick referral form'.
- The Wrexham First 1000 Days Project has encouraged more ante-natal provision through targeted commissioning and better awareness of existing provision. For example, Home -Start Wrexham are now offering the Family Links 'Welcome to the World Programme' parenting programme to expectant parents and Families First have commissioned services to deliver additional mental health support and couples relationship support to pregnant women and their partners across Wrexham.
- An Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) awareness session was delivered to Elected Members in early 2019. The session provided an overview of the current understanding about the prevalence and impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences, giving some examples of the emerging work to develop responses to prevent, intervene and mitigate against ACEs.

Strategic Objective 3: Reduce inequalities in Education

North Wales Public Sector Equality Network [NWPSSEN] research and consultation concluded the need to:

- Reduce the educational attainment gap between different groups;
- Reduce identity based bullying in Education; and
- Ensure that young people are adequately supported in making the transition between education and employment.

What said we would do:

To make a positive difference to reducing inequality in education we will:

- Implement the Education Improvement Plan; Welsh in Education Strategy; Wrexham Public Service Board, Partnership Delivery Board 2 Business Plan; Anti-Poverty Strategy; and Local Housing Strategy.
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- The Education & Early Intervention Department continues to support young people aged 11-16 years who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) via the TRAC project. Young people who are aged 16-25 years are NEET with a mental health issue are supported to access education, employment and training via the ADTRAC project. A total of 285 young people across years 7-11 in Wrexham secondary schools who are at risk of becoming NEET have been identified and referred for TRAC intervention. Of the 285, 128 have been referred into the TRAC ACTIVATE Programme for Careers Wales intervention. Referrals to other agencies have included Aim High, The Venture, Caia Park Partnership and Action for Children.
- A training session for school governors which focused on meeting the needs of vulnerable learners has been held. The session gave governors an overview of the wide range of vulnerable learners that attend Wrexham schools, the nature of their needs and what schools can do to support vulnerable learners to support them to achieve, as well as support their wellbeing. Information has now been circulated to all governing bodies and is included in the Governor Training Programme for 2019.

- The Council is continuing to review its Special Educational Needs Provisions to ensure that they reflect the changing needs of pupils with additional learning needs.
- Bespoke packages of support which promote wellbeing continue to be delivered for gypsy traveller pupils, in order to bridge the gap between school and home, to enhance parental engagement.
- A dedicated Attendance Outreach Officer has been appointed for the Traveller Education Service to support and improve the attendance of gypsy traveller pupils.
- The Traveller Education Service have been successful in obtaining a Welsh Government grant to be able to facilitate onsite support for after school provision and to encourage education through play with gypsy traveller early years pupils.
- The local authority strongly promotes equality and inclusion through partnerships with organisations such as Show Racism the Red Card and Stonewall Cymru.
- The Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award scheme effectively promotes well-being and life skills and improves engagement in educational opportunities. Delivery of the DofE via one Open Award Centre provides opportunities for vulnerable young people who find attendance at school difficult.
- The Education & Early Intervention Department is a member of the Wrexham Adult Community Learning Partnership which prioritises English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
- Learners who are refugees and asylum seekers learners are very well supported by the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service in the Education & Early Intervention Department, in partnership with other LA services such as Admissions, Housing, Health and Voluntary Organisations such as the Red Cross.
- Outreach worker appointments through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme funded by the Home Office have continued to promote inclusion and wellbeing for this vulnerable group by working with the wider community, as well as with targeted schools.
- The appointment of a First language Teaching Assistant through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme funded by the Home Office has supported pupil engagement and learning in schools and communication with families.
- The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme funded English language activities for refugee children during the summer holidays to promote continuity of language acquisition.
- Inclusion projects are being provided across Play & Youth Services to assist families facing barriers to opportunities in accessing provision and opportunities to play in their own community. A number of referrals into the Play and Youth team have become more complex with families experiencing extra-ordinary barriers to play. The Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019 recommends the development of a system to

greater support these families in respect of their play requirements with a view to developing a tool for professionals working with families. Strong relationships have been developed with partner agencies to progress this priority.

- Youth Services and Youth Support Services provide a diverse offer for children and young people operated or commissioned by the Local Authority.
- Young people are signposted well to Youth Support Services through the young people website ([Young Wrexham website for young people](#)) which is managed by the Info Shop and also via the Info Shop itself.
- Wrexham Pupil Referral Services (the PRU) provide education for up to 72 secondary school age learners who are unable to attend mainstream schools due to behaviour, illness, or otherwise may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them. All learners have either missed or have been disengaged from significant aspects of their education.
- Wrexham Pupil Referral Services sets high aspirations for all learners through very effective pastoral support and multi-agency approaches. Successful transition is supported through thorough assessment of learner needs and all pupils who leave the service at their statutory school age successfully secure employment, education or training opportunities.

Strategic Objective 4: Reduce inequalities in personal safety

North Wales Public Sector Equality consultation and research concluded that there is a need to:

- Increase the reporting of hate crime and harassment and take steps to reduce incidents of hate crime and harassment including on-line abuse and bullying;
- Increase the reporting of domestic abuse and take steps to reduce domestic abuse; and
- Increase awareness in vulnerable communities around telephone and on-line fraud.

What said we would do:

To make a positive difference to reducing inequality in personal safety we will:

- Implement Wrexham Public Service Board, Partnership Delivery Board 3 Business Plan; and the Council's Organisations Development and Workforce Strategy.
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- The Regional Tactical Hate Crime Group, introduced in 2018, continues to meet. The group have considered data at a North Wales and Wrexham town/ rural level.
- A package of materials was provided by the Community Cohesion Coordinator for Hate Crime Awareness week and this was shared with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network.
- The new Regional Cohesion Team will be undertaking a community tension mapping exercise. In the interim period, a small number of partnership actions have been drafted to maintain the momentum around hate crime work.
- Initial discussions have taken place regarding the existing processes for community tension monitoring. The new Regional Cohesion Team will be taking this work

forward, including helping the local authority and partner agencies to plan for any potential increase in community tensions as a result of Brexit.

- The Council have committed to specific actions in relation to Modern Slavery, which have been informed by the Regional Modern Slavery Group action plan. The actions are incorporated within the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group action plan.
- A desktop review of Wrexham's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) partner positions in relation to modern slavery was undertaken and discussed at a Community Safety Partnership meeting in October 2018. A small number of recommended partnership actions have been drafted as a result of the review. These actions are in addition to partners' own internal Modern Slavery Duty responsibilities.
- The Council joined Bawso (a third sector organisation providing specialist services for BME services) at an awareness raising stall in Ty Pawb on White Ribbon Day in 2018 to promote awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Bawso continue to provide specialist support to victims and Black & Ethnic minority groups in Wrexham around issues relating to domestic abuse, genital mutilation and human trafficking.
- Development of a regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Team is ongoing.
- The Council continues to develop support for asylum seekers and refugees as part of the Home Office resettlement programme. This includes:
 - Ensuring ongoing support and integration for arriving families/individuals;
 - Developing a myths and facts information sheet for local authority officers;
 - Working with LA staff, police and partners to manage and mitigate against potential/actual community tensions arising from migration issues;
 - Representation on the National Syrian Resettlement LA group with Wales Migration Partnership, the Partnership, the Home Office and Welsh Government.
- Workforce Development delivers courses on personal safety when required and managers are encouraged to identify any safety risks to employers in the course of their work and seek advice from Occupational Health and the Health and Safety Team.
- Contact Wrexham is now a designated "safe place" within the safe place scheme.

Strategic Objective 5: Reduce inequalities in representation and voice

North Wales Public Sector Equality consultation and research concluded that there is a need to:

- Decision making bodies need to become more representative of the communities they serve;
- Consultation and engagement is improved through strengthening links between the Public Sector and local and national groups representing people from all protected groups.

What we said we would do:

To make a positive difference to reducing inequality in representation and voice we will:

- Implement Wrexham Public Service Board, Partnership Delivery Board 3 Business Plan, our Customer Focus Strategy; Welsh Language Strategy; Consultation and Engagement Strategy; Communications Strategy; and Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy.
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- The Council has adopted an Involvement Strategy (2018-2022) that seeks to ensure that all people are engaged and consulted on decisions that affect them and, where possible, we work together to design and deliver services.
- The Council has been developing assessment processes that include service users on recruitment panels to ensure their voice is included in decision-making processes (e.g. in Social Care). Value based recruitment has also been piloted in Social Care recruitment to enable those further from the labour market to demonstrate their value base where they cannot provide previous working experience.
- The Participation Strategy for children and young people has been approved. A self-assessment tool has been developed and an e-learning module for associate pupil governors has been implemented and promoted via the Participation Team.

- The Participation Team effectively facilitates work across both the statutory and voluntary sector, providing training and development opportunities for young people and professionals.
- The Senedd is a well-established and proactive forum which provides good opportunities for children and young people in Wrexham to influence and become involved in decision-making processes. Senior politicians and officers regularly meet with the Senedd to seek their views on matters affecting young people across the County Borough.
- The Council works proactively to support carers in the workplace. The Work-life Balance and Flexible Working policy aims to support flexible working to balance commitments outside work including caring responsibilities. The Time off Work Policy gives provisions for other urgent leave requirements due to family circumstances.
- The HR and Organisational Development Team provides feedback from the annual Employee Opinion Survey to managers about employee experiences.
- The HR and Organisational Development Team highlight any concerns raised in exit interviews with employees, enabling services to examine issues identified and improve employee experiences in the future.
- Any child or young person making a complaint is offered the support of an advocacy service as a mandatory procedure. Any adult making a complaint that requires the support of an advocate can also have this arranged.
- The Council continues to work to increase the diversity of tenants engaging in participation. The Tenants Forum and training programme are ongoing as part of the Tenant and Leaseholder Strategy (2018-20) and its associated action plan.
- The Council's Procurement Team facilitates commissioning processes that actively involve people with protected characteristics in the commissioning and co-production of services. Examples include the co-production of services in Adult and Children's Social Care.
- The Local Development Plan (LDP) consultation process invited representation from people with protected characteristics.

Strategic Objective 6: Reduce inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment

North Wales Public Sector Equality Network [NWPSSEN] consultation and research confirmed the need to:

- Improve access to information, communications and the customer experience, and in particular for people with sensory loss; and
- Improve physical access to services, transport, the built environment and open spaces.

What we are going to do:

To make a positive difference to reducing inequality in access to services, information, buildings and the environment we will:

- Implement Social Services Business Plan; Wrexham Public Service Board, Partnership Delivery Board 3 Business Plan; Anti-Poverty Strategy; Customer Focus Strategy; Welsh Language Strategy; Consultation and Engagement Strategy; Communications Strategy; and Organisational Development and Workforce Strategy.
- Improve equality monitoring and analysis;
- Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments;
- Take forward specific actions arising from the Strategic Equality Plan consultation; and
- Where possible and appropriate, contribute to the delivery of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Objectives 2016-2020.

What we have done:

- The Council is committed to ensuring that those involved in the planning and designing of public spaces, such as shops, parks and transport systems, will be encouraged to have processes in place to consider and involve people living with dementia in their design and audit processes in order to understand their needs.
- Dementia Champions in the Council raise awareness of the information and communication needs of people with dementia through Dementia Friendly sessions.
- The Council has fully implemented an all age Disability Service. The service aims to reduce duplication and assist in the transition from childhood to adulthood.

- Customer Services have worked with Mencap to host their audio pods which entailed the history and nature of friendships and intimate relationships experienced by people with a learning disability.
- The Council has successfully engaged with other North Wales authorities to regionalise some aspects of the Fostering Service. A regional website is due to be developed to expand the pool of in-house foster carers to improve placement options. Recruitment and training of foster carers will be delivered regionally to increase the efficiency of the service. Regional working enables a wider range of foster carers to be accessed by children looking to be fostered. Factors such as religion, culture, language, and ethnicity are taken into account when foster carers are considered. The widening of the recruitment areas enables more options for each placement.
- The Info Shop hosts the 'Young Wrexham' website ensuring that young people can access advice and guidance at any time.
- As part of the Welsh Government's Play Sufficiency Duty, specific consideration is given to children and young people who may experience barriers in access to play beyond those reported by most other children. Particular attention paid to the play needs of disabled children, looked after children, young carers, children from traveller families and those from other minority ethnic groups.
- Any families experiencing extraordinary barriers to accessing staffed play provision can be referred into the Play Scheme Inclusion Project to ensure these children have access to supported play provision.
- The Deposit Local Development Plan (LDP) contains site allocations to meet the needs of the gypsy and traveller community.
- The Capital Programme Evaluation Criteria includes active consideration of the Council's seven planning principles in decisions on funding allocation. These principles include a focus on prevention, prioritising the most vulnerable and the five ways of working from the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
- Information on policies and processes and job application forms/guidance is available in digital, paper and other formats, such as large print and Braille on request.
- Workforce Development have delivered deaf awareness sessions and British Sign Language sessions for staff.
- Customer Services continue to develop "Digital Communities" to enhance the digital skills of staff and enable them to further support customers, for example, signposting customers to digital training in libraries and community centres.
- A new digital platform has been implemented which enables customers to access more services online. The Council has worked with partners to upskill and encourage customers to try digital.
- A survey has been developed to gain an understanding of digital inclusion across Wrexham and how this can be enhanced where necessary.

- A Communications Strategy for both internal and external customers is in place. The external strategy includes a section which addresses the issue of communicating with specific client groups and 'hard to reach' groups.
- An updated Council website will be launched and the Council's internal intranet will be developed, with the aim of improving the clarity of information provided to staff and customers and the ease with which customers can access services.
- In January 2019, the outreach offer, funded through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, was widened to include information sessions, specialist information and advice for this vulnerable group and access to services if necessary.
- Contact Wrexham has taken on the responsibility of issuing bus passes which had previously seen a number of delays. This has been very successful with the waiting times reduced from 6-8 weeks down to the customer receiving their bus pass on the same day. Customers providing the necessary evidence are able to apply for and receive their bus pass in a single visit to Contact Wrexham.

Equality Information:

We have used the Census 2011 to help us have a better understanding of the local population. We use this information to help us understand how well our services are meeting the needs of the whole population.

'This is Wrexham' data sheets are now available to staff for all protected characteristics plus Welsh Language and Culture, Carers, and Poverty because these are corporate priorities.

Race and Ethnicity:

93.1% of Wrexham County Borough's people are White: Welsh / British¹. That leaves over **9,100** other customers, colleagues, neighbours and friends whose ethnic identity breaks down as below:

Disability

1 in 5 people in Wrexham have their day to day activities limited by ill health. That's **27,905** people². The census does not collect specific information on numbers of people with a disability, but relevant information can be taken from disability benefits information³.

Youth Information Shop

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| GENDER | Male | 5036 |
| | Female | 6341 |
| | Total Young People | 11377 |
| AGE | 11-12 | 2224 |
| | 13-15 | 2621 |
| | 16-19 | 4282 |
| | 20-25 | 1697 |
| | Over 25 | 141 |
| | Parent / Carer | 241 |
| | Adult representative | 171 |
| CONTACT TYPE | In person | 9703 |
| | Telephone | 886 |
| | Information outreach | 658 |
| | Email / website / letter | 132 |

¹ Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2012. Respondents classifying themselves as White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

² Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2012. Respondents classifying themselves as having their day to day activities limited either a little or a lot by a long term health problem or disability.

³ Data taken from Nomisweb on the 25 September 2013. Source is DWP benefits claimants – working age client group

Young Person's Counselling Service

Number of young people attending counselling by ethnic background

| | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| White | 197 | 317 | 514 |
| Mixed Race | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Asian or Asian British | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Black or Black British | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Chinese or Chinese British | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic background | 8 | 13 | 21 |
| Not known | 4 | 18 | 22 |
| Total | 211 | 351 | 562 |

School year

| | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Year 6 | 11 | 10 | 21 |
| Year 7 | 28 | 26 | 54 |
| Year 8 | 37 | 60 | 97 |
| Year 9 | 28 | 60 | 88 |
| Year 10 | 26 | 53 | 79 |
| Year 11 | 27 | 58 | 85 |
| Year 12 | 10 | 17 | 27 |
| Year 13 | 11 | 15 | 26 |
| Not known | 33 | 52 | 85 |
| Total | 211 | 351 | 562 |

Sexual Orientation

As reported by the young person

| | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Heterosexual/straight | 63 | 110 | 173 |
| Gay/lesbian | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| Bisexual | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Other | 9 | 21 | 30 |
| Prefer not to say | 9 | 14 | 23 |
| Total | 84 | 158 | 242 |

Disability

Children and young people with a disability presenting for counselling:

| Gender | Total |
|---------------|--------------|
| Male | 14 |
| Female | 9 |
| Total | 23 |

Special Educational Needs [SEN]

| Gender | Total |
|---------------|--------------|
| Male | 17 |
| Female | 11 |
| Total | 28 |

Preferred language

As reported by the young person

| | Male | Female | Total |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| English | 148 | 224 | 372 |
| Welsh | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 58 | 112 | 170 |
| Not known | 5 | 15 | 20 |
| Total | 211 | 351 | 562 |

Religion or belief

As reported by the young person

| Religion or belief | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| None | 43 | 61 | 104 |
| Baha'i | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Buddhist | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Christian | 38 | 90 | 128 |
| Hindu | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jain | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jewish | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Muslim | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Sikh | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Atheist | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Prefer not to say | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Not known | 130 | 190 | 320 |
| Total | 211 | 351 | 562 |

Profile of School Governors by gender 2018-19

Nursery & Primary Schools

| Gender | Number | % |
|--------|--------|------|
| Male | 192 | 34% |
| Female | 374 | 66% |
| Total | 566 | 100% |

Secondary Schools

| Gender | Number | % |
|--------|--------|------|
| Male | 61 | 50% |
| Female | 60 | 50% |
| Total | 121 | 100% |

Total Primary & Secondary Schools

| Gender | Number | % |
|--------|--------|------|
| Male | 253 | 37% |
| Female | 434 | 63% |
| Total | 687 | 100% |

Profile of school pupils by ethnic background – January 2018

Primary School

| Ethnic Background | Pupil No. | % |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| White British | 12185 | 92.85 |
| Mixed/Multiple | 264 | 2.01 |
| Asian/Asian British | 177 | 1.35 |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British | 71 | 0.54 |
| Other | 62 | 0.47 |
| Unknown | 365 | 2.78 |
| Total | 13124 | 100 |

Secondary School

| Ethnic Background | Pupil No. | % |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------|
| White British | 5501 | 89.99 |
| Any other white background | 136 | 2.22 |
| Information not obtained | 0 | 0.00 |
| Refused | 17 | 0.28 |
| BME | 459 | 7.51 |
| Total | 6113 | |

Special School

| Ethnic Background | Pupil No. | % |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| White British | 268 | 90.85 |
| Any other white background (WOTH) | 7 | 2.37 |
| Information not obtained | 0 | 0.00 |
| Refused | 0 | 0.00 |
| BME | 20 | 6.78 |
| Total | 295 | |

Pupils not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Over the past five years, there has been a very good reduction in the number of year 11 Wrexham school leavers known to be NEET, reducing from 3.3% in 2012 to (43 young people) to 1.7% in 2018 (18 young people). This is close to the Wales average of 1.6%.

Teenage Conception Rates

In partnership with BCUHB, the Info Shop provides a comprehensive sexual health service to young people up to the age of 25 years, impacting very positively on reducing teenage conception. The conception rates (per 1000) for under 16's reduced from 6.9 in 2014 to 5.5 in 2015 and further to 1.9 in 2016 and for the first time, below the Wales average by 1.7pp. In 2017, this increased to 4.1 but across a 3 year period, there is still a declining trend. For under 18's, the rate significantly reduced from 37.1 in 2015 to 21.2 in 2016 and to 21 in 2017. This remains slightly above the national average of 20.2. (Note: conception rate data is always two years behind. Reducing teenage conception rates is an ongoing priority.)

Wrexham Hate Crime Referrals

North Wales Police recorded 221 hate crimes in Wrexham during 2018/19. This is an increase from 165* recorded hate crimes in 2017/18. The number of recorded hate crimes is steadily increasing.

* Note: The 2017/18 figure is slightly higher than previously reported in the SEP Annual Report 2017-18 (159). As crimes are progressed it can become apparent further down the line that there is a hate related element to them and the figures can change over time.

Employee Data – see latest Employee Equality Monitoring report
2017/2018

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/top_navigation/equality.htm

Glossary of Terms

Appendix 1d

| | |
|---------|--|
| ACEs | Adverse Childhood Experiences |
| BME | Black Minority Ethnic |
| CAMHS | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services |
| EHRC | Equality and Human Rights Commission |
| EIA | Equality Impact Assessment |
| LGBT | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender |
| NEET | Not in Education, Employment or Training |
| PSB | Public Service Board |
| SEP | Strategic Equality Plan |
| VAWDASV | Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence |
| WG | Welsh Government |
| WLGA | Welsh Local Government Association |

Summary Of Strategic Equality Plan - Annual update report (2018-19)

Please note - this is a summary of the assessment. Refer to the full text.

Department: Finance
Department Reference: FIN/EIA00057/2016
Responsible Officer: Mark Owen
Job Title: Head of Finance
Completed Date: 17.12.19

| Positive Impact | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| All | This is an information report. ☹ Equality issues arising from activities described in the report are subject to an equality impact assessment which is recorded separately. |