



Swansea Council

Equality and Diversity Review 2018/19 (Year ending March 2019)

Report – Summary Version

If you require this information in a different format, please contact accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk, telephone 01792 636731 or write to:
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Introduction

This is a summary of the City and County of Swansea's Equality and Diversity Review Report for 2018-19. This is our eighth review under the Public Sector Equality Duty and reflects the reporting regulations for Wales, which were introduced in 2011.

Reviewing our Equality Objectives

We reviewed progress against all of our Equality Objectives (contained within our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in April 2019 and provide a detailed update in the full review report. This is the second update for our 2016-2020 objectives as we adopted a refreshed SEP in 2016. Our [Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20](#), the summary and easy read versions are here.

Equality Information

We continue to use equality information to inform our work, e.g. in Equality Impact Assessments, specific surveys and needs assessment work.

Employment and Training Information

The information currently held on the workforce can be found in the full review report.

Additional information

This section briefly details some of our other work (relevant to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty) during 2018-19.

Equality Member Champions - Our Councillor Champions cover a wide range of equality issues in addition to wider themes such as health and wellbeing, carers and domestic abuse. The Champions provide a voice for traditionally under-represented groups or issues, which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business although they may not be the responsibility of any individual or Committee.

Equality Representatives

Our Equality representatives are a group of staff from departments across the Council which have been established to support and build capacity to integrate work on Equalities across the Council. The purpose of this group is to raise awareness of the needs and views of people with protected characteristics within the Council through their service areas and departments. The group acts as a link between their department and Access to Services team to identify any issues with equality issues and support the completion of EIAs

Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – Equalities

Our Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – Equalities, was established in October 2018 and aimed to examine how the Council was meeting and embedding the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales). The inquiry also aimed to explore how the Council was meeting its duties in terms of; eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those

who do not and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Overall, the inquiry concluded that the Council was meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 (and the Public Equality Duty for Wales 2011) and many areas of good practice were identified throughout the research. However, the inquiry also identified a number areas for improvement in relation to improving data and information, building upon existing work to ensure effective policy, practice and processes are embedded within core business and improving consultation and engagement.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) – We continue to use our expanded EIA process, which includes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), carers, community cohesion, poverty, social exclusion and Welsh language. Our Equality and Engagement protocol (to ensure that EIAs are tracked and monitored through the Council's reporting and decision making process) continues to be very useful in ensuring that equality issues are considered and addressed where needed.

Consultation and engagement – We have continued to develop our relationship with local community groups via, e.g. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Forum (run in partnership with South Wales Police), regional BME network (led by Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST)) and our Disability Liaison Group.

Co-production – This year we have developed a draft Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework following a development workshop with the Transformation and Future Council Policy Development Committee. The Committee will continue to develop Policy on co-production and make recommendations to Cabinet during 2019-10. This will be aligned with our revised Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

Hate crime – We have continued to implement a Swansea Hate Crime Stakeholder Action Plan with key partners. The plan aims to increase the reporting of hate crime. Awareness training has been delivered by Victim Support & Swansea Council to partner agencies and Council staff.

Community cohesion – We have continued to implement the Welsh Government Community Cohesion programme during 2018-19. The new programme focus on key issues, including breaking down barriers to inclusion and integration, providing support and tackling discrimination. Our Community Cohesion delivery plan has also incorporated a number new of activities in relation to identifying and mitigating actions related to community tensions related to Brexit.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - Our Children and Young People's Rights Scheme sets out the arrangements we have to ensure compliance with the due regard duty for embedding the UNCRC into the local authority policy framework. We have continued to embed Children's Rights into key Council policies, plans and practice. During 2018-19 we have continued to incorporate UNCRC standards within the Strategic Equality for

Plan for Schools, Child and Family Services Participation Strategy, the Corporate Parenting Strategy, the Early Years Strategy, the Healthy and Sustainable Pre-School Scheme, the Play Sufficiency Assessment, Young People's Service plans and Swansea's Public Service Board's Well-Being Plan.

Education and schools – Our work with Show Racism the Red Card has continued in 2018-2019 through a number of workshops and events in our schools. The sessions explored various issues around racism, stereotyping, terminology and media influence. Schools from Swansea were also well represented at the annual Show Racism The Red Card Wales creative competition awards. A tool has been developed and launched to allow schools to record identity-based bullying and harassment. Further work is underway develop the tool and promote its use and value to schools.

Poverty – Tackling Poverty is a corporate priority and one of five key objectives within Swansea's Corporate Plan. The Tackling Poverty Strategy was reviewed and published in January 2018. A cross departmental Delivery Plan sets out commitments across the Council ensuring that tackling poverty is everyone's business. Steps have been taken to establish a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission which will bring together key decision makers with people with direct lived experience of poverty.

Welfare reform – We have continued to mitigate the negative impact of Welfare Reform by preparing for the roll-out of Universal Credit and ongoing training to raise awareness. The 'Policy In Practice' analysis of Swansea's Single Household Benefit Extract took place in September 2018. A Data Sharing Agreement has been written and approved that allows the household level data to be utilised in order to provide offers of support to targeted and selected cohorts.

Domestic Abuse – The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Strategic Partnership Group reviewed the objectives in the strategy and have established actions for 2019/20. The Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop (OSS) continues to develop its services through a multi-agency partnership approach. The range of services on offer are across the continuum of need, from crisis drop-in through to the Freedom Programme, Nurturing Programme, and coffee and crafts sessions. Surgeries on a range of issues are on offer including legal advice, substance misuse and debt advice. To reinforce our preventative agenda Swansea's Domestic Abuse Hub continues to support children and their families and takes a 'whole family approach' to support families with children at the earliest opportunity.

Easy-read – We will be publishing our annual review in an easy-read format again this year.

Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS) – We have a co-ordinated approach to all interpretation and translation. We also have a SMS text message service for residents.

Work with older people – We have continued to implement the steps in Swansea's Wellbeing Plan action plan to meet one of our key partnership objectives – Live Well, Age Well and ensure activity is aligned to Ageing Well work. Swansea's Public Services Board have endorsed the principles and actions set out in the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and supports the development of a Human Rights City approach in Swansea. We have continued to work with the Network 50+ and Dementia Friendly Swansea to develop work around Ageing Well. We have also co-produced a Dementia Friendly Action Plan which will be further developed in 2019/20.

Website

To help us make the Swansea Council website accessible, Digital Services uses the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. These guidelines explain how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities, and user friendly for everyone. We aim to ensure that the site is free of jargon, uses simple, plain English and Welsh, is easy to search and presents information in a logical order. The Web Team provides support to web editors and written guidance via the staff portal (Staffnet) to encourage clearly written, consistent pages. Following on from the work done by Swansea Public Service Board on how to produce Easy Read and Plain English versions of documents, there is now information on Staffnet to which staff can refer.

Concluding comments

This annual report has allowed us to assess our progress during the second year of our refreshed SEP. Progress has been made against all of our Equality Objectives and the amount of additional information we have to report over and above our Equality Objectives continues to grow, which is very positive. This demonstrates both our ongoing commitment to the equality agenda and the additional progress that is being made.