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| ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT |
|  |
| GWENT POLICE |
| 2022 | 2023 |

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of an annual equality report is to provide an overview of an organisation's progress and efforts in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within its operations and workforce. It serves as a means of transparency and accountability by documenting the organisation's commitment to these principles and tracking its performance over time.

**Monitoring progress**: The report allows organisations to assess their progress in achieving equality objectives and targets. By examining relevant data and metrics, such as workforce demographics, representation at different levels, pay gaps, and employee feedback, organisations can evaluate their performance and identify areas for improvement.

**Highlighting achievements**: The report provides an opportunity to showcase successes and initiatives that have contributed to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion within the organisation. It allows organisations to recognize individuals, teams, or departments that have made significant contributions in this regard and share best practices.

**Identifying areas for improvement**: Through data analysis and self-assessment, an annual equality report helps identify areas where the organisation may be falling short of its EDI goals. It can help pinpoint disparities, biases, or barriers that exist within the organisation and guide future strategies and interventions to address them effectively.

**Promoting accountability**: By publishing an annual equality report, organisations demonstrate their commitment to transparency and accountability in their efforts to promote equality. It provides stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and the wider public, with an insight into the organisation's EDI practices, progress, and challenges.

**Engaging stakeholders**: The report serves as a communication tool to engage and inform various stakeholders about the organisation's EDI initiatives. It enables organisations to maintain an open dialogue with employees, customers, partners, and other interested parties, fostering trust, understanding, and collaboration in promoting equality.

**Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements**: In some authorities, organisations may be legally required to produce annual equality reports as part of their obligations under anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation. These reports help demonstrate compliance with legal requirements and show a commitment to fulfilling legal obligations.

An annual equality report plays a vital role in driving organisational change, promoting transparency, and fostering a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion. It enables organisations to measure their progress, identify areas for improvement, celebrate achievements, and engage stakeholders in their journey toward creating a more equitable and inclusive environment.

## THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is a comprehensive piece of legislation in the United Kingdom that aims to protect individuals from discrimination and promote equality across various characteristics. It replaced and consolidated previous anti-discrimination laws to provide a more unified and consistent approach.

The Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination on the basis of nine protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimization related to these characteristics.

The Act is built on three key principles: equality, diversity, and inclusion. It aims to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between individuals with different protected characteristics.

The Act introduces a Public Sector Equality Duty, requiring public bodies and certain other organisations to actively promote equality and eliminate discrimination. It entails conducting equality impact assessments, setting equality objectives, and publishing information on compliance with the duty.

Since its enactment, the Equality Act 2010 has undergone some amendments and updates to address emerging issues and improve its effectiveness. It is important to stay updated with any legislative changes and guidance issued by the government or EHRC.

The Equality Act 2010 serves as a crucial framework for promoting equality and protecting individuals from discrimination in various areas of life. Its strategic goals include fostering an inclusive society, ensuring equal opportunities, and challenging discriminatory practices based on protected characteristics.

## BACKGROUND

In October 2020 Gwent Police agreed a Joint Strategic Equality Plan (JSEP) in partnership with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It outlines the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (PCC) and Chief Constable’s commitment to ensure that respect for equality, diversity, inclusion, and human rights underpins everything Gwent Police does. The plan is effective from 2020 until 2024 and ensures that Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are priorities for both organisations.

The plan aims to achieve the following four strategic equality outcomes and has an associated tactical delivery plan to aid delivery. 

**Supporting Vulnerable People**: To investigate and achieve justice for crimes with the greatest impact on vulnerable people, ensuring effective support for victims.

**Legitimacy and Fairness**: To ensure that Gwent Police and the OPCC carry out their activities in a way that is proportionate and non-discriminatory and fosters positive relations between communities and policing.

**Access, Engagement, and Inclusion**: To ensure that the services delivered by Gwent Police and the OPCC respond to the views, experiences, and needs of people who identify with protected characteristics, and the work the Force does promotes inclusion and cohesion.

**Creating an Inclusive Workforce and Promoting Fairness**: To work towards a representative workforce and an inclusive workplace culture and ensure that everyone working for Gwent Police and the OPCC are treated fairly and without discrimination.

## PERFORMANCE

The JSEP, a core part of delivery across Gwent Police and the OPCC is governed through the Force’s Legitimacy meeting. The plan in place across both Gwent Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is in-place until 2024 when it will be reimagined to reflect the changing nature of policing and the communities of Gwent. The current plan remains under delivery across Gwent and forms part of all strategic plans developed within the force.

From records, the force performance as at the end of the financial year 2021-2022 was as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **64%**  73 MEASURES | **21%**  31 MEASURES | **9%**  10 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |

Following a review, the force performance as of the end of the financial year 2022-2023 was as follows

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **78%**  89 MEASURES | **21%**  24 MEASURES | **1%**  1 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |
| **14%** increase | **Maintained** | **8%** reduction |

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVE ONE | SUPPORT VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Focusing on how the police supports vulnerable groups across Gwent and works with partners. This sub-objective is set across the following area: 

* violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence​
* hate crime and disability-related harassment​
* early intervention and prevention​
* supporting victims ​
* criminal exploitation of children and other vulnerable people​
* modern day slavery and human trafficking​
* fraud and cyber-crime​
* crimes against older people

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 22 MEASURES | 8 MEASURES | 0 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |

Over the past year, the Force has made satisfactory progress under objective one, focusing on continually improving the services provided to vulnerable people. Since the adoption of the victim contact unit, officers, staff, and victims have been able to access enhanced support which ensures correct signposting, greater emphasis on a person’s wellbeing and more timely contact.   
  
Looking at specific areas of work, like many forces across the country, Gwent Police have invested in the development of a strategic approach to tackling violence against women and girls. In addition to improvements to the handling of information and investigations linked to violence against women and girls, the force has delivered an external facing campaign which shines a light of the perception of women and girls and ask society to make a change.

The force has also recently completed an external rape review the findings of which have been reflected in organisational learning as well as a dedicated rape action plan.

Hate crime is also an area which impacts those potentially vulnerable and living their lives with a protected characteristic (as defined under the Equality Act 2010). The force has recently refreshed the strategic plan for delivery as well as the associated action plan. Following extensive support by the Strategic Equality and Diversity Manger, with additional support from the LPA PC Harm and Vulnerability Officers the following measures has been developed:

* Hate crime lessons plans planned and delivered in local schools and other third sector settings.
* Weekly, monthly, and quarterly quality reviews embedded within governance.
* Improved external scrutiny panel which is aligned to HMICFRS inspection criteria.
* Embedded additional scrutiny through the CPS Hate Crime Rejuvenation All-Wales Board.
* Dedicated external facing events to provide a bespoke message to those more likely to be a victim of a hate crime.
* Recruitment of dedicated points of contact to support victims and officers dealing with hate crime.
* Deep dive into quality through an independent dip sample of 50 hate crimes, broken down by LPA and hate crime strand.
* Delivered training to officers and staff which reflects lived experience and third sector testimonials.
* Refreshed induction training to better equip officers with information to support them engaging with victims of hate crime.

The previously mentioned independent dip sample of 50 hate crimes found that, based on HMICFRS grading the force performed as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Outstanding | 0 | 0% |
| Good | 7 | 14% |
| Adequate | 33 | 66% |
| Requires Improvement | 10 | 20% |
| Inadequate | 0 | 0% |

**Point of success**

* 98% were allocated to appropriate resources
* 88% included a clear investigation framework
* 82% maintained regular victim contact
* 94% resulted in a proportionate outcome

**Points of learning**

* 58% completed the required Niche template
* 22% of investigated crimes considered additional witnesses
* 1% were allocated an enhanced service at initial point of recording and review
* 46% of victims were known to the suspect
* 28% were repeat victims of crime
* Less than 1% were considered from evidence-led prosecution
* 28% provided evidence of supervisory oversight
* 10% of outcomes considered an alternative disposal pathway
* 22% of outcomes recorded a clear justification for closure outside of the criminal justice process.

The force has designed a fast improvement plan to ensure that points of success are continuously improved, and points of learning challenged.

Through the work delivered in partnership between EDI and local policing teams, early intervention and prevention have also been a driving force behind delivery. As part of business as usual, proactive engagement within local education authorities has resulted in visits to local schools to discuss – crime, reporting, misogyny and other areas of criminality

The force has also delivered improvement to the way in which policing actively engages and work with members of our GRT community. The force has developed a GRT quarterly forum which actively seeks to perceptions and issues of those living a GRT lifestyle. The forum has resulted in the co-production of a joint authorised encampment policy as well as additional recruitment internally of dedicated officers who are trained to work with GRT communities as they go about fully embodying GRT heritage.

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVE TWO | LEGITIMACY AND FAIRNESS

This objective ensures that actions and activities undertaken by Gwent Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are legitimate and fair, acting on behalf of the communities of Gwent. There are six independent areas which make up this key objective:

* stop & search and use of force ​
* community confidence in the use of police powers ​
* vulnerable people in custody ​
* public complaints ​
* public satisfaction ​
* transparency

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 18 MEASURES | 8 MEASURES | 0 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |

The strategic importance of policing acting with legitimacy, fairness, and on behalf of community wishes cannot be overstated. Police forces play a crucial role in maintaining public safety, upholding the rule of law, and fostering trust between the police and the communities they serve.

Policing based on legitimacy and fairness builds trust within communities. When agencies operate in a manner that is perceived as just and equitable, community members are more likely to cooperate with the police, report crimes, and provide crucial information. Trust and cooperation are vital for effective crime prevention and solving cases.

When police act with legitimacy and fairness, communities feel safer. Residents are more likely to engage in proactive measures to prevent crime, such as participating in community watch programs or providing learning to local officers. Additionally, police legitimacy helps deter potential criminals, as they perceive a higher risk of being caught and face consequences for their actions.

Policing practices that respect community wishes and values can help mitigate tensions and reduce conflicts between the police and the public. By actively engaging with communities and considering their concerns, the police can address underlying issues, reduce discrimination, and prevent the escalation of conflicts. This fosters social cohesion and harmony.

Policing based on community wishes involves understanding the specific needs, priorities, and concerns of different neighbourhoods. This knowledge allows officers to focus their resources and efforts on addressing the most pressing issues faced by the community. By aligning their actions with community expectations, police can implement targeted strategies that are more effective in solving problems and improving quality of life.

Acting with legitimacy and fairness enhances the authority and credibility of police officers, staff and the wider organisation. When the public perceives the police as legitimate, they are more likely to comply with laws, respect police authority, and accept the outcomes of policing interventions. This contributes to maintaining social order and stability within communities.

By acting with fairness, policing can minimise bias and discriminatory practices. Treating all individuals with equal respect and dignity, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, religion, or social status, helps build trust and prevents the erosion of community support. This approach also reduces the likelihood of legal challenges and public backlash against the police.

The strategic importance of policing with legitimacy, fairness, and responsiveness to community wishes lies in its ability to foster trust, enhance public safety, reduce conflicts, address community-specific challenges, maintain authority, and prevent bias. These principles not only contribute to effective law enforcement but also create a foundation for healthy and thriving communities.

Across Gwent Police, as well as UK Policing, this has been a theme of challenge and acceptance for change. One priority which should be highlighted is the multiple action plan that have been developed to tackle racism by becoming an anti-racist service.

The term, an anti-racist organisation means; Actively identifying and eradicating the systems, structures and processes that produce radically differential outcomes for ethnic minority groups.

It involves acknowledging that even when we do not regard ourselves as ‘racist’ we can, by doing nothing, be complicit in allowing racism to continue.

It is not about changing the understanding or perceptions of communities, but rather about fixing systems that have not benefited and at times even damaged ethnic minority people.

Gwent Police are focused on three plans, these are:

* + NPCC Race Action Plan
  + CJS All-Wales Anti-Racism Plan
  + Welsh Government Pledge

It has been agreed across Wales that the following areas will be focused on to deliver real change through action:

* Improve the method and compliance of the recording of equality monitoring information, especially ethnicity.
* Engaging and utilising neighbourhood policing with build links with under-serviced communities.
* Establish opportunities to engage with the school’s programme Engage and encourage more members of our under-serviced communities to take part in scrutiny.
* Understand any challenge any disproportionality in vehicle stops.
* Fully embrace the strict criteria for the use of body worn video.
* Actively review taser incidents.
* Ensure talent management to encourage retention of diverse officers and staff.
* Act as a listener ear to the experience of Gwent’s diverse workforce.
* Encourage all officers and staff members to set and achieve diversity objectives to deliver their own professional development.

To align expectation with the importance of change, the force has delivered a local plan, which is locally owned and locally delivered. This plan sets out areas of action required within force to change perceptions, challenge long-held thinking and create a service which is truly equal.

Already the force has developed work in the following areas:

* Community based approach to recruitment through robust and bespoke positive action.
* Reimagined strategic mapping of community voices at the heart of decision making, with additional community members forming part of scrutiny groups.
* Delivered training to officers and staff from those with lived experience (GRT engagement and Black Culture/ Heritage)
* Acceptance that existing data principles do not provide officers and staff with the best information to adopt an anti-racism mindset, with a national drive to standardised data recording standards.
* Co-production approach with internal and external stakeholders while creating measures to tackle bias and disproportionality.
* Acceptance that owing to a lack of challenge and understanding that policing has created an environment in which racism has existed with a commitment to create new ways of developing a new mindset and approach across policing in Gwent.
* Delivery of a new equality impact assessment which enables policy leads to fully realise the potential outcomes of services and create measures to actively overcome any disproportionate outcomes.

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVE THREE | ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT, AND COHESION

A core part of policing by consent is how the police engage with key stakeholders and members of the community. This equality objective considers: 

* access to policing services and information​
* working with partners​
* community inclusion and cohesion​
* community engagement​
* children and young people​
* access to victims’ services

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 31 MEASURES | 4 MEASURES | 1 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |

Actively engaging with all communities is crucial for policing because it:

* Builds trust and confidence between the police and the public.
* Promotes inclusivity and representation within policing.
* Enhances problem-solving and crime prevention efforts.
* Helps prevent bias and discrimination.
* Strengthens community partnerships.
* Contributes to overall public safety.

Active community engagement enables police officers and staff to understand community needs, foster positive relationships, and work collaboratively towards safer and more cohesive communities.

Over the past year there has been a concerted effort between EDI and local policing teams to build community engagement networks across Gwent. This has required extensive outreach and relationship building with local influences and third sector organisations who proudly served Gwent’s’ most under serviced communities. The approach taken, with co-production at its heart has allowed policing across Gwent to engage with communities who previously shied away from proactive engagements with local policing. This engagement has included:

* More than 10,000 community members engaged with regarding equality diversity and inclusion, specifically around the services on offer for those vulnerable as well as those more likely to be victim of a hate crime.
* Facilitated and attended more than 500 community events.
* Increased community contacts by 70%.
* Increased community representation on external scrutiny meetings by 40%.
* Responded and mitigate more than 150 complaints which did not result in formal process is and instead focused on learning and perception.

To ensure a sustained and resilient approach to community engagement, EDI have created a cultural calendar which accounts for local events as well as culturally sensitive celebrations to enable the wider organisation to improve understanding but also actively participate in events to truly illustrate the inclusive nature of policing across Gwent. The cultural calendar will continue to be a staple in the strategic delivery for the organisation, continually learning from lived experience as well as those actively participate in and engaging with members of Gwent’s local communities.

Another area of delivery under this objective is the forces commitment to tailor services to better engage with members of Gwent’s communities living with a disability or with career responsibilities. Over the past year the EDI team have resourced a number of community engagement sessions specifically focused on delivering supportive messages around living with disability and how members of our vulnerable community can effectively engage with policing.

Through the Herbert, Elm and Trinity protocol, Gwent Police has ensured that local officers are able to effectively respond to reports and incidents involving members of our disabled community.

Accessibility is also a fundamental right and a core part of the organisations public service equality duty, over the past year the EDI team has procured dedicated software which enables complex forms of communications i.e., forms, to be transposed into easy read documents using pictorial icons.

It is also important to reference the work carried out by the EDI team as part of the humanitarian response to refugees displaced through the Ukrainian conflict. working with partners the EDI team created and translated a range of publications which focused on introducing the policing style and services to Gwent’s newest arrivals. As part of this work Gwent Police arranged a welcoming event with partners from across the civil service, as well as the charity sector. The aim of this welcome event was two ensure a smooth transition an integration of those displaced into the white population.

## EQUALITY OBJECTIVE FOUR | CREATING A REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE AND PROMOTING FAIRNESS

Building a workforce which represents the communities of Gwent is a core part of building trust and confidence, as well as developing a culture which champions difference. This objective focuses on the work of communications, recruitment and training covering: 

* positive action​
* gender equality​
* wellbeing in the workplace​
* staff engagement​
* education and training​
* socio-economic deprivation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 19 MEASURES | 7 MEASURES | 0 MEASURES |
| Measures either delivered or consistently being managed through business-as-usual functions | Measures remain under development with planned delivery | Measures are yet to be introduced |

Creating a representative workforce within policing promotes fairness and equality which is crucial.

A diverse workforce builds trust within communities by reflecting their diversity and experiences. When people see officers who understand their backgrounds, they are more likely to trust and cooperate with the police.

It builds a range of perspectives and cultural insights that improve understanding and effectiveness. Officers from diverse backgrounds can better relate to and address the unique challenges faced by various communities.

Officers who share common cultural and linguistic backgrounds can communicate more effectively, breaking down barriers and building stronger relationships. This improves collaboration and information sharing between policing and the public.

A diverse workforce is better equipped to address community-specific needs and concerns. Officers who come from the same communities can offer valuable insights into local dynamics, enabling targeted strategies and initiatives.

Promoting diversity helps reduce biases and discriminatory practices. Officers from different backgrounds offer alternative perspectives, fostering fair and equal treatment for all individuals.

A truly representative workforce, which reflects local communities improves public perception of policing. Communities are more likely to trust and engage with a police force that reflects their diversity, leading to stronger community partnerships.

By achieving a representative workforce promotes trust, cultural understanding, effective communication, targeted approaches, fairness, and positive community perception. These factors contribute to better policing outcomes and foster a sense of fairness and equality within society.

Within Gwent, there has been a concerted effort to achieve improved workforce representation through recruitment but also those already within the service disclosing their equality monitoring information. The following section sets out the driver behind greater workforce representation but also the current force performance and overall workforce data.

## WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION

Building an inclusive and representative organisation is of paramount importance for several strategic reasons.

An inclusive and representative organisation brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This diversity fuels creativity and innovation as it allows for a broader range of ideas, insights, and problem-solving approaches. When employees feel valued and included, they are more likely to contribute their unique perspectives, leading to enhanced innovation and adaptability.

Inclusive organisations foster a sense of belonging and psychological safety, where all employees feel valued and respected. When employees feel included and able to bring their whole selves to work, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated. This, in turn, positively impacts productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organisational performance.

Based on year ending figures (financial year) for 2022 and 2023 – the overall headcount of the organisation grew by 5% over the 12-month period, showing an increase of 107 employees. Through Operation Uplift, total establishment grew by 107 officers (this considers those exiting the organisation). Staff number have also grown slightly with a 19 increase, whereas Community Support Officers have dropped by four.

Looking at gendered representation, this is a fluid picture due to the commonality of society moving away from fixed labels which often do not best reflect a person’s gender identity and/ or expression. Available information shows that those declaring themselves as of female sex grew by 6.63% between the close of the two financial years. Male sex grew by 3.35% which is still the dominant sex throughout the organisation. The number of people preferring not to disclose their gender identity also grew in this time by 104.24% representing 369 of the workforces. Sexual identity has also seen significant changes with the number of people not disclosing their sexual identity dropping by more than 10%.

Sexual orientation has also seen changes, those choosing to not disclose their orientation has dropped by nearly 10% with bisexual increasing by 20.4% and gay by 12.05%.

Age is a common concern across many organisations but particularly the police. Data shows that the biggest changes in workforce establishment come from the polar-ends of the age spectrum. Under 26 has grown by 15.14% as have the over 55s which has grown by 15.12%. The largest age demographic continues to be 41- 55 representing 855 employees.

Ethnicity and workforce representation has improved over the 12-month period. Officers and staff from a Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic heritage has grown by 9.09% which equates to a headcount of 84. White continues to form the largest portion with more than 2370 officers and staff declaring this ethnicity.

Looking at disability, there appears to be a mixed picture. Overall prefer not to disclose has dropped by 4.12% however those specifically not declaring any position has increased by 5.20%. Looking at available data more than 6.4% of the organisation identify themselves as living with a disability as defined under the Equality Act 2010. Looking at the recent Census data the average across Gwent stands at around 20%, showing a potential disparity in our own workforce.

Welsh language has continued to develop in the organisation with new learners up by 13.36% however owing to leavers, more advanced levels of Welsh learners and speakers have dropped on average by 3.5%. Importantly, those identifying as having no Welsh language ability has dropped by more than 66%.

Christianity continues to be the dominate disclosed religion however shows a downward trend, which is similar to other religions which are on average are down by 7%. Those stating they have no religion represents the largest cohort within our workforce and shows a clear upward trajectory with a nearly 13% increase over the last 12-months.



## CO-PRODUCING A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

As the organisation steps into the final phase of the current JSEP, involving community groups and staff networks when developing a new equality plan is of significant strategic importance.

Developing diverse perspectives - Community groups and staff networks bring diverse perspectives and lived experiences to the development of an equality plan. By involving them, organisations gain insights into the unique challenges and needs of different communities and employee groups. This diversity of perspectives ensures that the equality plan is comprehensive, relevant, and addresses the specific concerns of those it aims to serve.

Building stakeholder engagement - Involving community groups and staff networks demonstrates a commitment to stakeholder engagement and collaboration. It creates a platform for open dialogue, enabling organisations to listen to the voices of those directly affected by the equality plan. This inclusive approach builds trust, strengthens relationships, and enhances the organisation's reputation as a responsible and responsive entity.

Increasing ownership - By involving community groups and staff networks, organisations foster a sense of ownership and buy-in among stakeholders. When individuals and groups are actively involved in the development of the equality plan, they feel a greater sense of responsibility and are more likely to support its implementation. This increases the likelihood of successful adoption and long-term commitment to the plan's goals and objectives.

Bespoke approach - Community groups and staff networks possess valuable insights and expertise that can inform the development of tailored solutions within the equality plan. Their input ensures that the plan addresses specific needs and challenges faced by different communities and employee groups. This leads to more effective strategies, policies, and initiatives that are better aligned with the realities on the ground.

Making a real difference - Involving community groups and staff networks ensures that the equality plan remains relevant and impactful. Their involvement helps identify emerging issues, gaps in existing approaches, and opportunities for improvement. By keeping the plan up to date and responsive to evolving needs, organisations can maximize its effectiveness and create positive change within the organisation and the wider community.

Partnership approach - Engaging community groups and staff networks create opportunities for collaboration and partnership. By working together, organisations can leverage the strengths, expertise, and resources of these groups to develop and implement the equality plan. This collaborative approach enhances the organisation's capacity to achieve its equality goals and promotes collective impact.

Identifying and managing risk - Involving community groups and staff networks in the development of the equality plan helps mitigate risks associated with potential blind spots or unintended consequences. By seeking diverse perspectives and conducting thorough impact assessments, organisations can identify and address potential risks, ensuring that the plan is fair, inclusive, and avoids any inadvertent discriminatory outcomes.

Our values - Involving community groups and staff networks in the equality plan development process demonstrates an organisation's commitment to its stated values of diversity, inclusion, and social responsibility. It sends a powerful message to both internal and external stakeholders that the organisation is genuinely interested in promoting equality and respects the voices and contributions of all involved.

Involving community groups and staff networks in the development of a new equality plan brings strategic benefits, including diverse perspectives, stakeholder engagement, increased ownership, tailored solutions, improved relevance and impact, collaboration opportunities, risk mitigation, and the demonstration of organisational values. It enables organisations to create a more inclusive, responsive, and effective equality plan that has a meaningful and positive impact on the organisation, its employees, and the wider community.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

N/A

**PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS**

N/A

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

N/A

**EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

* This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.
* In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

**RISK**

N/A

**PUBLIC INTEREST**

* In producing this report, has consideration been given to ‘public confidence’? Yes
* Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? Yes
* If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: (or insert not applicable)
* Media, Stakeholder and Community Impacts:

**REPORT AUTHOR**

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**LEAD CHIEF OFFICER**

ACC Mark Hobrough

**GOVERNANCE BOARD AND CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL**

This report has been presented to the following board:

**People and Culture Board**

Meeting chaired by:

**Ch/Supt Vicki Townsend**

Meeting date:

**21.07.23**

Actions and amendments arising from the meeting:

**N/A**

This report has been presented to the following oversight board:

**Scrutiny Executive Board**

Meeting chaired by:

**DCC Rachel Williams**

Meeting date:

**01.08.23**

Actions and amendments arising from meeting:

I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers’ meeting.

Meeting chaired by:  
**CC Pam Kelly**

Meeting date:

**15.08.23**

I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain / not suitable for the public domain.

Signature: *(Insert CO electronic signature)* Date: