

Strategic Equality Plan

Annual Report

2020 – 2021

Year 1: 2020-2024



1. Introduction

This is the first Annual Report on Conwy's Strategic Equality Plan (2020- 2024) for the period 2020 - 2021.

The General Duty, set out in the Equality Act 2010, requires us to have due regard to :

- eliminating unlawful discrimination;
- advancing equality of opportunity;
- and fostering good relations.

The Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011, often referred to as Specific Duties, requires us to report on the following areas, to demonstrate we have given due regard to the Act :



- 1.1 The steps we have taken to identify, collect and use **Relevant Information**, and the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 1.2 **Progress towards fulfilling each equality objective**, including a statement on the effectiveness of the steps taken
- 1.3 **Specified employment information**, including information on staff, recruitment, training and pay

The remainder of this report will cover these three main areas.

2. Relevant Information

We used equality-related evidence to help set our equality objectives contained in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 and we also use relevant data when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on new and revised policies and practices. Some of this data will be linked to national statistics and wherever it is

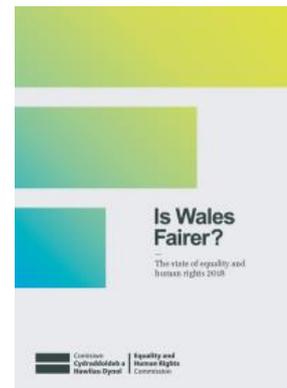
available, we try to use local and regional data as this is more relevant to us in North Wales and Conwy. We also take into account information obtained from engagement and consultation.

When we developed our Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, we revised our [Background Data and Research](#) document which sets out the relevant data that we used when revising and agreeing our current equality objectives and this is available on our website [here](#). We have revisited this work following a wealth of further data that has been published during the pandemic.

Other information referred to when making decisions includes :

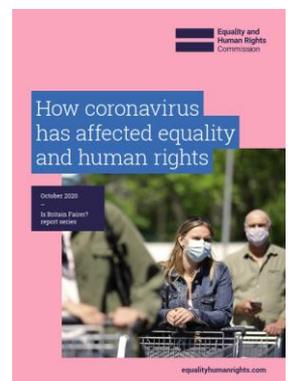
Is Wales Fairer? 2018

The Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018' which revealed that there were still many persistent inequalities with a rise in poverty leading to an even starker gap between the experiences and opportunities of some protected groups, which has been exacerbated even further during the pandemic. The EHRC identified recommendations under 6 themes: Education, Work, Living Standards, Health, Justice and Personal Security and Participation and these were considered and compared to relevant data held in Conwy when establishing the objectives and priorities in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.



EHRC Report: How Coronavirus has affected equality and human rights

This 2020 report highlighted that the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic had been unequal, entrenching existing inequalities and widening others. The groups most likely to be affected by the expected rise in poverty include young people, ethnic minorities and disabled people, who are already closest to the poverty line. Some groups have been disproportionately negatively affected by changes in the labour market (also increasing in-work poverty), interruptions to education, access to care (particularly older people, ethnic minorities and some disabled people) and there has been an increased reliance on unpaid carers, who are more likely

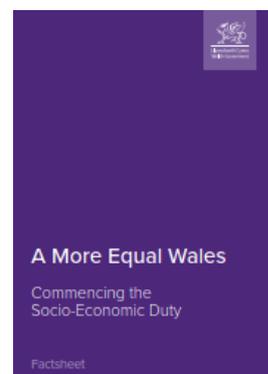


to be women. There has been a rise in reported domestic abuse and there are concerns about the ability of survivors to access justice.

Socio-Economic Duty

The enactment of Part 1, Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 – the Socio-economic Duty (SeD) came into force on the 31st March 2021, requiring public bodies, when making strategic decisions, to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Data was published by the Equality Human Rights Commission showing the persistent inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage: parents' socio-economic status

continues to be the primary predictor of which children prosper in adult life; the poverty gap is increasing for those living in workless households; 23% of all people living in Wales are living in poverty, of which 29% are children; social gradient in health outcomes is closely linked to socio-economic status, including lower life expectancy; people living in material deprivation feel less safe and are more vulnerable to domestic violence and abuse. All of these issues have been compounded during the pandemic. For example, during 2020/2021, the caseload for Council Tax Reductions increased by 712 households and for Free School Meals by 684 pupils. This was mainly due to Covid issues.



Locked out: liberating disabled people's lives and rights in Wales beyond COVID-19

The report, published in July 2021 by Welsh Government's Disability Equality Forum, suggests that decision-making during the early response to the pandemic largely undermined the social model of disability and reverted back to the medical model of disability. This led to disabled people being referred to as "vulnerable", being excluded from public spaces, socially excluded and a failure to take account of different accessibility requirements, with reduced access to transport and health service. Disabled people were more likely to die of the virus (68% of deaths from COVID-19 in Wales were among disabled people) and also experience greater financial hardship and poverty with further challenge around the use of DNAR (Do Not Attempt to Resuscitate). Once identified, many issues were rectified, but the report raises a concern that the social model was not the starting position and



relays the concerns that the clock has been turned back on any progress in adopting the social model.

Other Sources of Information

Our Corporate Information and Research team annually publish on our public website a document called “Equality Statistics Research Bulletin” which provides the latest equality data available on the makeup of people in our County. This information is referred to by officers when undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and consultations. The Research team also supports services when they are undertaking consultation in analysing the data gathered from such activities.

Census Data

The 2011 Census for Conwy is still regarded as the most reliable data source as the Annual Population Survey is often affected by sample size which can distort the data. The 2011 Census reported that 95.4% of the population was White British, 2.2% classified White Other and 2.4% classified as non-white (against all Wales figures of 93.2%, 2.3% and 4.8% respectively). 48.4% of the population were male, 24.8% were disabled, and 0.9% were Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. 16.5% of the population were aged 0-15, 58.9% aged 16-64, 24.6% were aged 65+ and 3.8% were aged 85+. We use this information to compare against our own equality monitoring data collected (for people using our services as well as our own staff) to see how closely it matches our local community make-up. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) aim to release the first results of the 2021 Census in Spring 2022 with full data released in 2023.



The Annual Population Survey 2020 tells us that 5.6% of the population of Wales is non-white which is a 0.8% increase since the 2011 Census for Wales of 4.8%. The Annual Population Survey is based on estimates and therefore the accuracy at a local level is variable. However, the ethnicity of pupils in school in Conwy in 2021 shows 92.6% of pupils were White British (down 0.3), 2.3% were White Other (up 0.1%), 0.1% were Gypsy/Travellers (no change) and 4.6% were Black Minority Ethnic (up 0.2%).

The latest ONS mid-year population estimate of 2019 showed 48.8% were male and 51.2% were female in Conwy. 16.2% of the

population were aged between 0-15, 55.9% were aged 16-64, 27.9% were aged 65-84 (which is much higher than the all Wales figure: 21%) and 4.3% were aged 85+ (compared to Wales: 2.6%).

There is no data available about people who are transgender at either a unitary authority or national level although the ONS has addressed this in the 2021 Census.

There is no comprehensive source of data about disability. The 2011 Census provides information on limiting long term illness, which is used to give an estimate of disability, and 12.1% had limiting illnesses affecting day to day activities “a lot” and a further 12.2% “a little” (totalling 24.3%), with 75.8% having no limiting illness. According to the Annual Population Survey 2020, 23.9% of working age people in Wales were disabled to a level that would limit their ability to work.

There is a register of physical and/or sensory impaired people and people with learning disabilities who use Social Services but this only captures information about those people who use Council services and at 2018/19 this was 6.2% of the population in Conwy against an all Wales figure of 2.1%. In August 2020 in Conwy, 12.4% of disabled people claimed Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance benefits.

Nearly 12% of the population in Conwy provide unpaid care (13,605 people) according to the 2011 Census.

There were 1000 babies born to residents of Conwy in 2019.

The only data about religious affiliations is from the 2011 Census with 65% Christian, 26% no religion, 0.5% Muslim, 0.3% Buddhist, 0.2% Hindu and 0.1% Jewish.

The life expectancy of females (at birth) in 2019 was 82.4 compared to males at 78.8 (3.6 years difference). The life expectancy for someone who is 65 is a further 19.2 years for males and 21.5 years for females (a difference of 2.3 years).

The 2011 Census shows Welsh language ability broken down by age, nationality and geographical area and the Schools Census provides data about pupils who attend Welsh medium schools.

60.6% of Conwy’s population have no knowledge of Welsh, 27.4%

are Welsh speakers with 20.6% speaking, writing and reading Welsh. Ability to speak Welsh is most prevalent amongst those of school age; 49.2% of 5-15 year olds can speak Welsh in Conwy compared with 40.3% in Wales.

There is no reliable data about the size of the gay, lesbian or bisexual population in the UK. Estimates from various sources range from 0.3% to 10%, but they do not allow for non-reporting or misreporting. The Annual Population Survey 2018 shows for all-Wales, 95.2% are heterosexual/ straight, 1.5% Gay/Lesbian, 0.8% Bisexual, 0.8% Other and 1.7% Don't know/refuse to say. The Equality and Human Rights Commission believe that these figures are likely to be an undercount.

In addition to the publications listed above, consultation has been underway in Wales on a **Race Equality Action Plan** (an anti-racist action plan) and an **LGBTQ+ Action plan** which have been developed around the evidence and data identified as part of the Socio-economic Duty report and from the impacts on outcome identified during COVID-19. The implementation of these in due course will contribute to our work in seeking to create a "More Equal Wales".

Complaints Linked to Equalities

Our Corporate Information and Customer Services Unit monitors the number of compliments and complaints received. During the year 2020/2021, there were 337 compliments (from external bodies or members of the public), an increase of 16.6% on the previous year. 306 complaints were received (a decrease of 3% on the previous year). 87.8% of complaints were resolved at Stage 1. There were no equalities related complaints. 30 complaints were referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. No complaints were taken into investigation. 25 referrals did not merit investigation, 4 received early resolutions and one awaits an outcome.

There were 16 formal complaints received by Social Care for the period 01/04/2020 – 31/03/2021, 14 of these complaints concluded at Stage 1 and 2 formal complaints concluded at Stage 2. 5 cases were referred to the Ombudsman with 2 not requiring an investigation, 2 successfully resolved at the 'early resolution' stage and 1 deemed premature. Whilst some of the complaints were



categorised under sections of the service named Disability and Older People, none were directly related to equality issues or claimed to be due to discrimination because of protected characteristics. There were 180 compliments received in Social Care during the same period.

Where we can, we will take steps to influence the improvement of data capture nationally as well as improve our own local data sets. It is anticipated that better disaggregated equality data from next year's Census will provide a solid base to measure our progress by protected characteristic.

3. Progress towards fulfilling each Equality Objective

Conwy's Equality Objectives are outlined in detail our Strategic Equality Plan. Our equality objectives for 2020-2024 are as follows :

- Objective 1: Outcomes in **Education** attainment and Wellbeing in Schools are Improved
- Objective 2: We will take action to ensure we are an **equal opportunities employer** and reduce pay gaps
- Objective 3: We will take action to improve the **Living Standards** of people disadvantaged by their protected characteristics
- Objective 4: We will improve **Health, Wellbeing and Social Care** outcomes
- Objective 5: We will improve **Personal Security and Access to Justice**
- Objective 6: Increase **Access to Participation** and improve diversity of decision making
- Objective 7: Develop our knowledge and understanding of the **socio-economic duty**

Each Equality Objective has a number of priority action areas

and our Action Plan sets out specific activities that will achieve these objectives and priorities.

Each service area in Conwy County Borough Council has an Equality Champion who co-ordinates the completion of actions identified for their service area. Equality Champions meet quarterly to discuss a wide variety of Equality issues, raise awareness and to review progress on the Strategic Equality Action Plan.

In the remainder of this section we have provided details of the progress made on Year 1 of our action plan and other relevant work that has been underway during the year which has contributed to improving the lives of people with different protected characteristics living and working in Conwy.

Objective 1: Outcomes in Education Attainment and Wellbeing in Schools are Improved

Priority Areas:

- 1.1 Address attainment gaps for children and young people to maximise their potential
- 1.2 Reduce high exclusion rates for disabled and ethnic minority children
- 1.3 Collate bullying data by protected characteristic to enable each school to identify relevant objective(s)
- 1.4 Tackle gender segregation by improving representation of girls and women on STEM courses (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and expanding range of subject choice
- 1.5 Address mental health for pupils in schools

The main focus during the pandemic has been to set up a range of Conwy Schools Wellbeing Teams Platforms to deliver and promote online evidenced based approved wellbeing interventions and training to upskill school based staff as well as promote wellbeing resources and activities for schools to share with children young people and families. The newly created Conwy Schools Wellbeing

Teams platform also promotes and is providing accurate and appropriate practical information on Coronavirus, the restrictions and good hygiene practice. The focus has been to provide training for school staff to deliver programmes which support respect, dignity, resilience and inclusivity in schools. Interventions have offered support on emotional literacy and awareness training courses for education staff and families e.g. Solihull Approach programme, Seasons for Growth, Friends Resilience, ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants), Developing healthy friendships and relationships, Relationships and sexuality education, Kiva anti-bullying programme.

A programme of Mental Health First Aid Training for schools staff has also been developed to increase staff confidence to recognise the signs of poor wellbeing, know how to start a conversation and how to raise the issue, as well as how to signpost and access support. The Conwy Schools Wellbeing Teams platforms guide staff to access safe and reliable support.

1.1.1 Performance Data to inform School Development Plans

Due to the Covid -19 pandemic, Welsh Government cancelled all data collections for the academic year so it has not been possible to collate performance data on all groups of learners. However, there have been comprehensive monitoring processes in place for all schools. School strengths and development needs are discussed in detail at the LA/GwE standards quality board. The current pandemic period has brought with it considerable challenges, however there is much evidence to show that schools continue on their improvement journeys and that learners continue to make progress.

1.1.2 Provision for Vulnerable Learners

The team plan to continue providing support remotely wherever possible in order to reduce the pressure on schools in terms of site visits and numbers of external staff on site; however, we will carry out 'face to face' visits, assessments, interventions etc, wherever possible and in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. Schools will differ in their capacity to allow specialist support to be provided on site, and we will reassure families that the standard of provision will not be compromised by the method of delivery.

A thorough review of specialist out of county and independent specialist placements has been carried out to inform the development of our own Conwy provision. Robust review and monitoring arrangements are currently in place to ensure the

appropriateness of places. Additional funding has been sought through the submission of a business case which, if successful, will be utilised to fund additional legal support to improve our success rates on appeals for independent provision. Work continues on a regional level to develop a plan for quality assuring independent provision and working with other Local Authorities to monitor provision. Procedures for young people who are Looked After who are educated out of county have been developed which creates a structured process for reviewing placements and working closely with colleagues in Social Care.

Officers are being identified locally to take responsibility for annual review processes and all post 16 placements.

1.1.6 Upgrade school technology to offer greater opportunity

We have supported schools to ensure a range of devices from laptops to chrome books are available for learners to access from home learning resources available on Hwb. Wifi Dongles were also provided to learners to ensure they have appropriate connectivity. The Hwb Programme to improve technology has successfully completed waves 1 to 4 has which was a significant achievement during challenging times. The network infrastructure has been replaced in each school to meet the new WG technical standards and broadband capacities were also increased and primary schools can benefit from 100mbps and secondary schools 1gbps. This work also included delivery of new equipment with thousands of devices supplied to schools in Conwy including iPads Foundation and other (920), Windows laptops and desktops (833), Chrome devices (4174) and Mac Caching Servers (64). As part of the project a business case has been approved to provide an additional funding annually and Schools are also encouraged to utilise their own ICT budgets.

1.1.7 Digital Competencies Framework

This programme will allow schools to improve their hardware:pupil ratios in accordance with WG guidance. GwE have developed a draft Digital Learning Strategy for schools across North Wales which offers guidance on appropriate blended learning styles (appropriate for Covid circumstances including lockdown) to enable education to continue and measures for digital equity were funded during the lockdown. Further action is needed in identifying and implementing school training needs. The pandemic has enabled schools to accelerate the use of Hwb overall and this work has progressed much further in terms of on-line learning than initially envisaged.

1.2.1 Evaluate and analyse exclusions to ensure there is no adverse impact on particular protected groups

We are currently working with school inclusion on improving understanding and procedures around exclusion.

1.3.1 Online reporting tool for collection of bullying data

An Anti-bullying policy for Conwy schools (based on WG guidance) has been produced and its adoption is up to individual schools. There is currently no automated process for collecting data, although this would be collected via the stats report from schools every September. Schools must have robust policies based upon the WG guidance.

1.3.5 Gender Identity Policy for Schools

A Gender Identity Policy is currently in draft format and is awaiting guidance and a template policy from Welsh Government. Viva LGBTQ+ continue to provide support and guidance on request by Conwy schools in relation to consulting on creating inclusive schools and supporting LGBTQ + pupils.

We continue to support schools with this agenda through the Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid Training Programme which helps staff to recognise the signs of poor wellbeing; know how to raise the issue, start the conversation and know how to signpost to access professional support. According to the Conwy School Health Research Network (SHRN) Secondary school data, issues relating to LGBTQ+ are the second cause of bullying within schools. To address bullying and to promote the creation of inclusive environments within our schools we have secured funding to support all Conwy secondary schools to deliver the Kiva anti bullying programme working with Bangor University. Some of our primary schools are also participating in the Kiva anti-bullying pilot research programme.

1.4.1 Include themes for self-audit around Education Equality Objective Priorities

We have produced a basic self audit tool (with supporting resources) to offer school staff the opportunity to be suitably knowledgeable about procedures. We have also been working to ensure that all governor safeguarding modules and governor related training are available to all individual schools. 5 out of 7 high schools are participating in STEM Gogledd. During lockdown, delivery was adapted to on-line activities but since September, STEM Mentors are going into schools and working with identified groups of learners. We are currently working with school inclusion on improving understanding and procedures around Exclusion.

1.4.2 Use Take pART! to incorporate Arts and Science to teach science through innovative means

In 2021 due to Covid restrictions take pART was undertaken on-line providing a mix of pre-recorded and live workshops for young people and their families. There were several installations placed in Llandudno for all to enjoy, essentially taking the arts to them. This included Art installation by Mike Badger, Photo trail by Paul Samson Oriel Colwyn and QR code posters for people to interact with by Livi Wilmore. We intend to pick this programme up again next year.

1.4.5 Annual checks/reminders to parents about Free School Meals and other benefits

The Council's Benefits Section obtains a list of all children in Conwy starting in Reception in September to check if we can award a Free School Meal/Pupil Development Grant for that child. If eligible award the necessary entitlement and advise the parent/guardian and school. We also use completed application forms for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction as claims for Free School Meal/Pupil Development where the parent/guardian fits the qualifying criteria.

We also review claims for Universal Credit and where customers state they also wish to claim Council Tax Reduction, once approved, if they have earnings below £7400 we email the parent/guardian with the web link to claim Free School Meal/Pupil Development Grant.

The Benefit Section of Conwy County Borough Council has been chosen by Welsh Government as a beacon authority for best practice in relation to the awarding of Education Benefits.

The Education Department also promotes the Free School Meals application process on school meals menus communications, in the annual Schools Information Booklet, Council's website and individual school websites. Individual schools promote the Free School Meal application process for new intakes and periodically in the school year. This is all done whilst still respecting the duty to keep the identity of the children entitled to FSM anonymous.

1.5.3 Seek funding to continue the work of "Create" to support mental health in 12-16 year olds

Sessions have continued with the current members on online during the pandemic using Zoom, which proved invaluable during these difficult times. The plan is to build and have an additional group for slightly older 17-25 year olds when they are taken out of the 'system'.

Face to face sessions will resume as soon as they can. This work has also continued to include our Looked After Children who are offered free spaces.

1.5.9 Work with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through delivery of a joint action plan

This remains an ongoing challenge with competing priorities. There has been an impact with Covid restrictions on teenagers. The group continues to meet but progress has been challenging and is not currently being achieved. Meanwhile we have been rolling out the adult mental health first aid training for all schools in Conwy and so far 60% of schools have attended training and are also committed to the roll out of the universal 5 Ways to Wellbeing initiative in their respective schools.

1.5.11 Deliver Seasons for Growth (for loss and grief)

We have recruited a further 37 Seasons for Growth companions to run the programmes for children on loss and grief and have introduced monitoring and quality assurance measures to ensure consistent delivery of the programme in Conwy Schools.

1.6.5 Reasonable Adjustments when communicating with Parents

Schools involve stakeholders including children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors and other users of the school when considering equality issues and individual communication needs. We also take into account preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials, interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country. The views of stakeholders and protected groups are earnestly taken into account when we set priorities via student voice, staff consultation, parental consultation and governor consultation.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Education Objective:

- Received positive feedback from ESTYN who undertook a thematic review of our central school support services during the pandemic.
- Adapted and continued with our safeguarding responsibilities throughout the pandemic and were a highly commended finalist in the 'building bright futures with children and families' category of the Social Care Wales Accolades Awards.
- Issued Free School Meal direct payments to 2050 families for 3555 Learners totalling £1,876,065.80

- Identified our digitally excluded learners and repurposed digital devices so all children could access online learning.
- Created new ways of providing bespoke Additional Learning Needs and Social Inclusion support for individuals.
- Found engaging ways to support young people at risk of disaffection digitally.
- Provided targeted interventions for potentially vulnerable Year 6 pupils transferring to secondary to ensure smooth transition.
- Initiated an online pantomime and streamed it to 200 school classes plus families.
- Developed bitesize online learning modules to support families home schooling which had 79.4k views to date.

Work Delayed Due to the Pandemic

- 1.1.1 Performance data collection (cancelled by Welsh Government for the academic year 2020-21)
- 1.2.1 School Support Plans to review Exclusions
- 1.3.2 Implement All Wales Anti Bullying Guidance
- 1.3.3 School Support Plans to feed bullying actions into business planning
- 1.3.4 Work with Show Racism the Red Card (work that commenced last year is delayed due to change in SRRC personnel)
- 1.4.3 Promotion of technical work experience placements (delayed due to working from home)
- 1.4.6 Young Ambassador Programme (pre-Covid all schools had a young ambassador but this is currently on hold due to challenges Covid has presented in continuing with extracurricular activities)

Objective 2 - We will take action to ensure we are an equal opportunities employer and reduce pay gaps

Priority Areas:

- 2.1 Address gender, ethnicity and disability pay differences
- 2.2 Review our flexible working practices to ensure equal opportunities at all levels

- 2.3 Ensure effective policies to prevent and respond to sexual harassment
- 2.4 Review Pregnancy and Maternity Provision in the Workplace
- 2.5 Ensure any use of insecure employment contracts (eg, casuals) adequately protects their rights as workers
- 2.6 Increase number of disabled people in work
- 2.7 Reduce gender segregation (the unequal distribution of men and women working in traditionally gender specific roles)
- 2.8 Improve participation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled people across apprenticeships
- 2.9 Consider the use of positive action measures in recruitment campaigns where specific groups are under-represented

2.1.1 Equal Pay Audit

We undertake an Equal Pay Audit every 12 months for gender, ethnicity, disability and age. The outcomes are published in the Strategic Equality Plan annual report (see section 4.2 of this report for this year's figures). We are developing a separate, more comprehensive, Equal Pay Audit report which provides more detailed analysis of the data for gender, ethnicity, disability and age and this will be published once finalised and a separate action plan developed.

2.2.2 Review Flexible Working and Family Friendly Policies

The Flexible Working Policy was reviewed at the start of the pandemic to make life easier for staff who were forced into working from home if they could at short notice, many of whom were also home schooling or became full time carers. We therefore removed many of the parameters around daily and weekly minimum hours, core times and settlement periods. These practices have been reviewed from time to time throughout the pandemic and most remain in place. A full review of the Flexible Working Policy will take place once we are clearer of the arrangements for our 'new norm' which is likely to follow a hybrid model, enabling staff to have a combination of working from home and in the office, subject to Government rules. As we are moving to a hybrid model, this is likely to impact on many of our Family Friendly policies and these

will be reviewed once our 'new norm' is clearer. This approach still needs to be consulted on before this work can be completed. A dedicated HR Officer has been assigned this work. The completion of this action will be carried over to year 2 of SEP.

2.2.3 VAWDASV Policy

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Policy was reviewed and updated in March 2020 and included the introduction of paid Safe Leave as the first Local Authority in Wales to do so. Previously we have trained all staff on basic awareness around VAWDASV and have also rolled out further more specialist training for staff working in this field supporting and protecting our communities.

2.4.2 Survey on Maternity Leave and Career Progression experiences

An online survey was developed to assess the impact on career progression of women in middle/higher grades who deviate from full time and to analyse career progression successes for people with different protected characteristics as well as assessing any impact to careers when staff start families. The feedback from this survey was analysed and although the majority of staff believe that the Council's Family Friendly policies supported women especially in maintaining and progressing their careers, there appeared to be some inconsistencies in how these policies were applied across the Authority. This has prompted further awareness raising and practical support being offered to managers and has identified a need to review policy training.

A number of women did believe that career progression was either more challenging or they decided through choice to put things on hold whilst they were raising young children. The feedback confirmed that by far, the majority of staff who did deviate to part time working was because they wanted a better work-life balance. Some of these staff did believe that they were not afforded as many training or career progression opportunities as full time colleagues.

2.5.4 Implement and Ethical Procurement Policy and raise awareness

An Ethical Procurement Policy has been implemented and on-line training is being rolled with initial awareness raising co-ordinated at the Procurement Forum with key links established for each Department. The policy and ethical conduct charter for

contractors is in the process of being rolled out and included in procurement activities. An awareness raising event was co-ordinated working jointly with Welsh Government which has been successfully attended by Conwy contractors.

2.6.3 Time to Change Pledge to support mental health

A proposal to implement Time to Change and draft action plan was considered by the Senior Management Team in early 2021 with a follow up discussion at Managers Forum where it was agreed that this would be a useful exercise in supporting staff mental wellbeing. SMT agreed that arrangements could be made to sign up to this initiative and work is in progress for signing the pledge and a launch in December 2021.

2.6.8 Project Search Learning Disability Supported Employment

Disability Services, Youth and Employability Service, BCUHB, third sector bodies and Llandrillo College are working together to commission Project Search to support people with Learning Disabilities to gain work experience and possible employment. 11 placements across CCBC and DCC have been agreed and individuals identified.

2.9.2 Equality Monitoring Data

We have continued to slowly improve the amount of Equality Monitoring data we collect through mandating these fields in all recruitment across the Authority and more recently with the introduction of Self-Service where staff can amend their personal (equality) data themselves. This has been encouraged through Team Briefs and Staff Brief newsletters and work continues to be ongoing in this area.

2.9.6 Develop employability activity that supports social care clients to get closer to the labour market

A task and finish group has been set up via the North Wales Learning Disability Partnership (6 Local Authorities and BCUHB), chaired by Conwy's Disability Service Manager, with members from both LA's, BCUHB Corporate HR, All Wales People First, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Llandrillo, Coleg Cambria, Careers Wales, Learning Disability Wales, DWP and other third sector partners. The group will develop a North Wales Supported

Employment Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities which aims to improve the employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities. Opportunities for paid employment are currently variable and limited with less than 6% of adults with learning disabilities in paid work. Recognising the need for an improved and consistent approach to supporting people with learning disabilities into work, the North Wales Learning Disability Partnership group (LDPG) has proposed the development of a employment strategy written with and for people with learning disabilities but with 'ownership' sitting with the partnership group. The aim of the strategy is that people with learning disabilities will have a better quality of life, living locally where they feel safe and well, where they are valued and included in their communities and have access to effective personal support that promotes independence, choice and control. The strategy is based around what people have said matters to them and will provide an implementation plan for the Local Authorities and Health.is based around what people have said matters to them.

2.10.1 Improving our Job Application Process

Work has been underway to simplify the application process and improve accessibility. During the pandemic, after an initial delay to all recruitment, the recruitment process has been transformed to an almost entirely virtual process which has entailed introducing additional measures to support job applicants and interviewing managers to get the most out of the virtual recruitment process. A further review of the process has highlighted that there is still much more we can do to improve our recruitment process to simplify it for applicants and this includes a review of how we prepare job descriptions and scrutinise the essential requirements of posts, reviewing the application form process and all other stages of the recruitment process, whilst maintaining our need to safeguard our recruitment process. A pilot of a simplified application form has been trialled which has produced positive results and feedback. This work will be ongoing during 2021/2022.

Jobs Fairs during the pandemic have declined, however we have supported two virtual jobs fairs, the All Wales Virtual Careers Fair and Careers2021 where we produced virtual stands providing information about our jobs and about Conwy County Borough

Council. We have also continued to facilitate interview skills sessions for pupils in local schools.

2.10.3 ADTRAC Project to support NEET (those Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Launched in 2018, ADTRAC in Conwy has successfully helped 16-24 year olds across the county find or move towards jobs via bespoke mentoring, counselling, work experience, training and volunteering opportunities. Over 350 referrals were made to the project and 200 young people supported, with a significant number of them gaining a qualification, moving into education and training, or starting a new career. The regional project ended in May 2021 when ESF funding ended. In Conwy it has been replaced by the Cynydd/Progress project, core funded by Conwy Youth Service.

2.10.7 Guidance to managers on capturing training application data

With the introduction of on-line training applications, guidance was produced for managers to explain how requests are processed and approved through self-service and people manager modules on our HR/Payroll System. This process has been invaluable during the pandemic when staff were working from home and has enabled us to capture all training requests and training undertaken. This will improve our training records for our Employment Monitoring Reports.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Employment Objective:

- Adapted our terms and conditions so that staff could work very flexibly to balance their demanding home and work commitments during the pandemic
- Developed hybrid conference methodologies for business forums
- Created a cross-disciplinary Covid Leadership Team to enable quick decision making and support staff in adapting to the ever-changing restrictions
- Created a 'We Are Conwy' brand pulling all of our collective efforts together within an intensive video-led communication programme to keep both staff and residents informed about how the pandemic was impacting them

Work Delayed Due to the Pandemic

- 2.5.4 Encouraging other employers when we commission work to anonymise applicants in early stages of recruitment process (carried over to Year 2 as part of recruitment project)
- 2.6.4 Provide written feedback for disabled applicants who don't get shortlisted or employed to explain why and explain the process (carried over to Year 2 as part of recruitment project)
- 2.6.5 Adopt the Same but Different pledge: "Rare Aware Charter" to recognise create a supportive working environment for employees who have a rare disease or have (carried over to Year 2)
- 2.6.6 Options for sharing vacancies with disability groups (carried over to Year 2 as part of recruitment project)
- 2.6.7 Community work experience for disabled people (carried over to Year 2)
- 2.7.1 Guide on avoiding biased and stereotypical language in the recruitment and other employment processes (carried over to Year 2 as part of recruitment project)
- 2.7.2 Review JE Score form to avoid stereotypical language
- 2.7.3 Review of Job Adverts to avoid stereotypical language
- 2.7.5 Raise awareness of Engineering and Technical opportunities and career paths in STEM subjects (carried over to Year 2)
- 2.8.2/4/5 Expand opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships including for our Looked After Children (carried over to Year 2)
- 2.8.4 Expand opportunities for apprenticeships (carried over to Year 2)
- 2.9.7 Positive action measures in recruitment (carried over to Year 2 as part of recruitment project)
- 2.10.6 Transgender Policy (carried over to Year 2)

Objective 3: We will take action to improve the **Living Standards** of people disadvantaged by their protected characteristics

Priority Areas:

- 3.1 Take action to address disproportionate negative impact on people with different protected characteristics

3.2 Support disabled people's right to independent living including adequate accessible and adaptable housing and related support

3.3 Better engagement with disabled people when renovating and designing buildings to ensure full accessibility

3.1.1 Equalities Impact Assessments are undertaken

The Equalities Impact Assessment form was reviewed in 2020 in partnership with our North Wales public sector partners in preparation for the Socio-economic Duty (SeD) and a new template was introduced in March 2021. This template is being used by most of our partners and will also be used for partnership working across North Wales.

Support continues to be provided to services undertaking EqIA's and we continue to check services are undertaking them through the Report Review Group agenda review. 5 workshops were delivered on the SeD prior to it coming into effect from 1 April 2021 and these workshops also stressed the importance of undertaking EqIAs. The EqIA Workshop was also updated to provide training on the new template which is now delivered virtually on a quarterly basis. Presentations were given on the importance of EqIAs in the Management of Projects & Programmes Forum and Service Renewal Project Teams.

3.1.2 Continue "Hynt" Wales scheme for disabled people

Our Theatres continue to be a member of the "Hynt" scheme which enables disabled people to use their card when booking tickets around Wales, to automatically confirm what their access needs are to attend performances anywhere in Wales, avoiding the need to repeat their access requirements every time they make a booking. It also includes the attendance of a companion for free.

3.1.3/4 Relaxed, Audio Described and Signed Performances and films and Dementia screenings in our Theatres

Accessible performances have taken place and are programmed in to our programme schedule. Whilst our Theatres were closed for

a long time during the pandemic, and Venue Cymru was converted into a Covid Hospital for a period of time, we are glad to have our Theatres back up and running and Accessible Performances and Dementia screenings will continue to be part of our offer.

3.1.5 Establish a regular dementia choir in partnership with Forget-me-Not choir

We linked up with the Cardiff-based charity, Forget Me Not Chorus, to launch a North Wales dementia choir, which was based at Venue Cymru for the first term and then moved to a location in Rhos on Sea. The choir was open to anyone living with dementia, their friends, family and carers. Sessions were led by conductor Manon Llwyd and supported by staff from Venue Cymru. Each term concluded with 'sharing' an informal evening where guests of the chorus members were invited to come along and hear the chorus sing and also join in.

Once lockdown started, the chorus rehearsals moved online and the North Wales chorus joined singers from Cardiff, Newport, Edinburgh and Cumbria for weekly singing over Zoom. Again, each term ended up with a sharing for friends and family. The online sessions are continuing.

We were also able to support at a late summer garden singing session for the residents of Llys Elian Residential Care Home, who live with dementia.

3.1.7 Tackling the underlying causes of Homelessness

Homelessness is a complex issue and as such needs a co-ordinated response and a multi-faceted approach to advise and support services. The focus of this year has been on the emergency response and therefore any planned development work has been de-prioritised. In responding to the pandemic, this has required a strong partnership approach to ensure that those who have been brought into accommodation have been appropriately supported, which has required a multi-agency response. Innovative use of self-contained cabins were made to bring a number of individuals off the streets which was done successfully in partnership with a range of support organisations. Conwy Housing Solutions seeks to work with a broad range of partners and has fostered excellent working relationships across areas such as

Health, Social Care, Community Safety, Housing and Employability to name just a few. Some highlights to join up service delivery and offer a holistic approach to tackling homelessness include:

- Supporting staff to work from a variety of community settings through co-location with other services such as Probation, Glan Clwyd Hospital, Youth Justice Service and at our Emergency Housing settings;
- Continuing to work closely with our colleagues at Citizens Advices, Housing Benefits and the DWP in response to emerging challenges relating to Welfare Reforms and the roll out of Universal Credit;
- Supporting young people to develop independent living skills through the Renting Ready Tenant Training package which picks up on key tenant rights and responsibilities and enables young people to develop the skills needed to manage their own home.

3.1.8 Awareness raising Campaign in relation to Homeless Prevention

Conwy experiences high levels of housing crisis and persons or households presenting as homeless. To try and better understand this we monitor the reasons why people are presenting in a housing crisis. Our analysis establishes that in nearly all instances the reason for presenting as homeless on the day is genuine and there are few, if at all any, instances of people not knowing who to contact if a risk of homelessness has been developing in the weeks prior. We remain committed to better promotion of our services to raise awareness of the importance of early identification of triggers or risk factors which can contribute to a greater risk of homelessness.

A number of training resources and awareness courses have been developed by Conwy Housing Solutions and these sessions have been delivered to a variety of partners and community groups in the hope of helping people to understand the pressures on housing and homelessness services locally and how people in the community and our partners can support the work of homeless prevention. The Housing Solutions Manager has spoken at a number of local, regional and national conferences to raise awareness of the good work undertaken in Conwy. Social media is also used for sharing messages and there has been an increased profile for homelessness via the Councils Social media streams when initiating the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol. Further work to increase

the profile of services and raise awareness via social media will be undertaken in the 2nd part of the year and a range of marketing materials will be developed.

The Coed Pella supported accommodation project is now operating, which includes provision of an emergency bed, for use when Bed and Breakfast would often have been the previous accommodation solution. Cartrefi Conwy have established 2 shared houses in Llandudno Junction for care leavers in conjunction with Social Care.

3.1.13 Raise awareness of ability to claim for Housing Benefit (where applicable due to Universal Credit) and Council Tax Reduction

In 2020/21, 2920 customers made a claim for Housing and/or Council Tax Reduction using the e-claim application form. The majority of our customers now use the e-claim application form and help is available over the phone from Benefits Staff. From January 2021 we now accept the DWP notice of Universal Credit claim/first payment as a claim for Council Tax Reduction in relevant cases without the need to complete a Council Tax Reduction application form. All schools have self-service access to view free school meals entitlements for children in their school in real time, rather than having to wait for a weekly list.

3.2.1 Develop community resource teams to support older to stay independent

This work is on-going. The 5 Community Resource Teams (CRTs) we have established in Conwy continue to develop and progress despite the fact that Social Care staff continue to work from home rather than from the CRT base. The coronavirus crisis has actually been the catalyst for some new and different ways of working emerging and the strong working relationships already established and embedded with our health colleagues in the CRTs enabled the teams to continue to work well together and to provide a multi-disciplinary response throughout the crisis. This work is now being driven forward and supported through the Transformation Programme.

3.2.3 Support people to live well with dementia

The funding made available to us via the ICF to develop support dementia services has enabled us to continue to fund the 5

Dementia Support Workers for a further 12 months. They have now firmly embedded into the CRTs and are seen as having a valued role in supporting the MDT to help people who are living with dementia and their carers to remain in their own homes. This funding has also enabled us to support a range of initiatives that are being delivered by third sector organisations. We have also been able to purchase a range of innovative equipment for care homes and hospital wards to enhance the lives of individuals living with dementia.

3.2.7 Development of Bron y Nant, Dinerth Road, Colwyn Bay into a Disability Respite Centre with Shop and Café

The project is progressing well and is looking to complete in 2022. The operational side is being developed in 3 streams: Disability; Complex Care; Work Opportunities.

3.2.9 Ensure we implement Part M of the Building Regulations requiring housebuilders to construct new housing to accessible standards for disabled people

Local Authority building control have maintained a high standard for ensuring compliance with regards to the implementation of Approved Document M – Access and Facilities for the Disabled. New housing is checked on plan and on site to make sure that disabled people can access the property, move around the ground floor and use a disabled compliant Water Closet (WC). In the past 12 months contraventions to this regulation include the obstruction of WCs due to the sink position and access thresholds which are too high for wheel chair users. These problems have been rectified and the properties made compliant.

The Conservation Officer continues to work closely with the Housing Renewal Section on the next phases of the Colwyn Bay Property Renewals Scheme as well ongoing work with the Conwy Civic Hall and furthering redevelopment possibilities regarding the Civic Offices, Llandudno Archives and the Llandudno Tram Shelter. Development Management endeavour to ensure that applications for residential development provide a balanced range of housing types to reflect the needs of the area.

3.2.10 Affordable housing to meet the needs of Disabled People

A Strategic Adaptions Group has been set-up to strengthen the strategic focus for the provision of adaptations. There are 4 key areas of focus which include the following:

- To streamline application and referrals process
- To improve communication
- To make best use of existing stock
- To improve delivery and customer satisfaction

We have implemented a new adaptation application process including referral forms and Customer Service Standards have been developed in partnership with key stakeholders via the Strategic Adaptions Working Group. We have continued to monitor the supply and demand for adaptation housing units (social units only) via the Specialist Housing Panel.

By monitoring the supply and demand for adapted properties, we are able to identify if the applicants are waiting longer for adapted social housing compared to applicants waiting for general needs housing. If necessary, the group are able to highlight concerns to the Steering Group and recommend actions to improve wait time.

3.2.11 Effective and efficient Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Application Process

A review of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process has been carried out. One of the main changes is removing the need to carry out provisional means tests and only carrying out one means test which is at the beginning of the DFG process. The means test process now only looks at bank statements over a 3 month period instead of the previous 12 month period. This has speeded up the process and also stops a lot of abortive design works being carried out. The need for agency fees and invoicing per DFG has stopped. Any design fees are now deducted from the Capital allocation every 6 months via an internal transfer. Re-approvals for any additional works are now carried out at the end of works which has saved officer and administration time. Standard letters have also been reviewed and only the essential letters are sent out to the clients.

3.2.12 Healthy Homes Checks

The Housing Improvements team is working with Warm Wales to provide advice to homeowners on how they could save money and have a warmer, safer home. They will assist clients to:

- save money on energy and water bills to gain cheaper prices, discounts and savings;
- register on the Priority Services Register (PSR) for gas, electricity and water. This ensures extra support and advice (eg, advance notice of planned cuts, priority support in a power cut, providing heating and cooking appliances if gas supplies are interrupted etc.);
- maximise their income and improve budgeting;
- connect to the gas network ;
- replace old heating systems;
- install a cooker locking valve;
- install safety measures such as carbon monoxide detectors, hand rails and other aids.

Warm Wales were intending to visit residents within the Colwyn Bay Renewal area in March 2020 but due to the COVID 19 outbreak this has been postponed.

3.2.13 Children's Residential Assessment Centre Project

Located at Bron y Nant in Colwyn Bay, the new building will provide everyone who comes to stay, their own private living space and a large communal area for socialising. Its locality will make it accessible for most people to reach, and easy for them to access the amenities and services they need and enjoy in the area. This will offer a place where children can be safely cared for and nurtured on a temporary basis. Work on this project has been delayed due to the pandemic and due to issues with the original contractor.

3.2.17 Promote Recycle Schemes for Community Equipment

We continue to promote the recycling of community equipment, even during the pandemic. All equipment at Community Equipment Services is re-used where it can be. This saves us over 3 million pounds a year cost avoidance. Any equipment that cannot be used is stripped down to use as spare parts and the rest is scrapped. The scrap metal is taken away once a month and we receive payment depending on weight. All community equipment services in Wales

follows the national minimum standards for recycling which is 70% and in Conwy we currently run at around 92%.

3.2.18 Enforcement of Planning and Building Control to keep communities safe

Even during the pandemic we have continued to provide an efficient service, and we were able to hold virtual meetings with our customers on the more complex applications and we were the first authority in Wales to hold a virtual Planning Committee meeting and one of a few authorities undertaking Planning Committee site visits. Planning Enforcement continues to prioritise enforcement of Planning control to ensure new and existing development is appropriate so far as possible, though this is limited to reactive work predominantly, but performance remains good. The Building Control Team continue to pursue many Dangerous Structures and unauthorised works. Examples include the case on the front page of the daily post in Glan Conwy with the poorly built extension and various failing retaining walls in the county.

3.2.24 Advice to people with learning disabilities when they lose their carer

Work continues with people with learning disabilities and their parents/carers to ensure they have access to good, consistent and accessible information and advice to proactively plan for the future when they lose their carer. This involves the Conwy Connect Futures Planning Project and links with the Disabilities Accommodation Group.

3.3.4 Corporate Policy on Building Repair and Maintenance ensuring appropriate access issues are catered for

The draft policy and strategy have been produced and consultation is underway and will be taken through the formal approval process.

3.3.5 Public Convenience Upgrades

The refurbishment of Dolwyddelan public conveniences is complete and the legal process is nearing completion to transfer the facilities in Dolwyddelan and Llanrwst (Watling Street). Formal agreement has also been obtained with Abergele Town Council for the transfer of toilets at Pensarn, Water Street and Pentremawr Park and refurbishment works are being specified for these sites. An 'in

principle' agreement has been secured with Conwy Town Council for the transfer of toilets at Conwy Quay, Deganwy and Llandudno Junction. The design option for Conwy Quay has been out for consultation with key stakeholders, including CADW and local members and will be presented to Conwy Town Council shortly. Additional funding has been agreed with developers for Conwy Civic Hall of 50% up to a maximum of £75k. Ysbyty Ifan Community Council have agreed to take ownership of their public conveniences and we are working with them on the design. Significant repairs have been carried out on LlanfairTH and Rowen toilets. We are re-submitting the grant application for additional funding for Gwydir Park and are currently in discussions with Penmaenmawr Town Council regarding the adoption of the promenade toilets.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Living Standards Objective:

- Successfully built and commissioned a new enterprise zone offering units for businesses to start-up or expand in the wake of Covid
- Developed a Decarbonisation Plan to achieve net carbon zero by 2030 and a Biodiversity Plan
- Developed pioneering new approaches to delivering affordable housing and worked in partnership to set up cabins to bring homeless people off the streets during lockdown
- Collected 3 million food waste collections, 3 million recycling collections, 750k general waste collections, 546k garden waste collections and 310k absorbent hygiene product collections (nappies and incontinence products), Gritted 70k miles of roads and inspected 1,281km of highway
- Introduced a Household Waste Recycling Centre appointment system
- Paid out over £84 million pandemic related grants on behalf of Welsh Government
- Escalated our Business Support Service, answering over 10,000 calls and processing 3045 grant applications.
- Became the first Housing First project to be awarded Welsh Government accreditation

Work Delayed Due to the Pandemic

- 3.1.10 Resources to target tackling homelessness amongst prison leavers
- 3.2.2 Pilot a different approach to dementia care in people's own homes
- 3.2.4 Service area specific performance indicators to increase take up of Direct Payments
- 3.2.14 Support for vulnerable residents to live independently in suitable accommodation (delayed due to the pandemic)
- 3.2.15 Shared Customer Care Standards for adaptations (delayed due to the pandemic)
- 3.3.2 Appropriate engagement with disabled people in initial design phase of new build projects and renovations open to the public

Objective 4 : We will improve Health, Wellbeing and Social Care outcomes

Priority Areas:

- 4.1 Ensure health and wellbeing needs of carers are met
- 4.2 Improve access to services for Gypsy Travellers and improve engagement to develop trust
- 4.3 Increase uptake rates of people with learning disabilities taking up annual health checks
- 4.4 Suicide prevention plan Talk to Me 2 is fully evaluated and new action plan to reduce suicide in middle aged men in Wales
- 4.5 Evaluate progress on mental health to ensure we are meeting the needs of people with different protected characteristics
- 4.6 Use Social Model of Disability language
- 4.7 Implement specific awareness and support for people with neurological conditions

4.1.1 North Wales Carers Strategy and Needs Review

Our multi-agency planning group for carers, COG 8 had begun working on a number of issues that had been identified through the self-assessment against the standards outlined in the North Wales regional carers strategy. We have collaborated with the workforce team to implement Social Care Wales Carers Toolkit resources within induction and training processes.

- E-learning packages have been made available to staff from partner agencies and all Conwy staff.
- Developed proposals to create a more flexible range of short-breaks/respite options looking at examples of good practice across the region.
- A Flintshire scheme operated by NEWCIS called “Bridging the Gap” was thought to provide great potential for providing more flexibility for short breaks, albeit mostly focused on carers who are earlier on in their caring journey
- Carers Outreach were awarded some funding to run a pilot scheme along similar lines for carers of people living with dementia which operated for a short time before Covid-19 restrictions affected delivery.
- Crossroads also received some funding to trial a new project “Efo Ni” which would provide effective early support using volunteers to help people access local community activities or support them to continue with their own interests and hobbies, combatting isolation. Covid had a significant impact on this pilot project.
- The ongoing development of approaches to sustainable and flexible respite care will continue when Covid restrictions allow.
- A detailed analysis was undertaken of the various reasons that people refuse the offer of an assessment to understand the reason for the decline. Over 400 responses were analysed and grouped into themes. Overwhelmingly, the top response (160 carers) was “not required at the present time”, followed by an almost equal number of various responses which indicated that the carer was managing their situation and/or already getting the level of support they needed or had already had an assessment recently, suggested reassuringly that the vast majority of people who decline an assessment are not being disadvantaged by doing so. Carers are always encouraged to communicate their needs should their circumstances change.

4.1.4 Support Young Carers to Achieve their Potential

Availability of flexible breaks was hampered by COVID but services have resumed since September and include short breaks with adult placement carers, residential respite and Direct Payments. Bron Y

Nant project – the delivery of new residential respite facility - is progressing.

4.2.2 Site assessments using Gypsy/Traveller Encampment protocol

A health assessment will be undertaken when required but they are very infrequent and no assessments have been required for a number of years.

4.3.1 Improve take-up in Conwy of annual health checks for people with learning disabilities

This work continues and the regional transformation team have secure funding for a post in 2021/22 to further develop the up-take of the annual Health Checks.

4.4.3 Action plan to target the improvement of mental wellbeing in farming communities

Work has started to alter service delivery within the Vulnerable People Service to locality based support. The first pilot area will be Llanrwst, which by its nature will pick up issues relating to mental wellbeing in rural and farming communities. We have commissioned a text based service from Mental Health Innovations which can be targeted at farming communities. We hope to connect with Farmer's Union to support the marketing of this service.

4.4.4 Promote the “staying well” programme targeting specific issues for specific age groups

The “wellbeing” programme of activities are promoted widely across the county, both internally via health and social care staff and externally via our colleagues in the 3rd and independent sector. The team have a very active Facebook page where programmes are promoted, in addition to their mailing list, through their quarterly “wellbeing pack” and the DEWIS Cymru website.

Sessions are developed for people over the age of 65 but participants ages range from 30+. The programme includes sessions developed specifically for people living with Dementia, such as the ‘Music and Movement’ sessions and those with mental health issues were supported through our ‘Art and Mind’ programme.

105 Online sessions were delivered and attended by 1197 people, during the period April 2020 – 25th March 2021.

During the initial lockdown the Community Wellbeing team were deployed to help with Conwy's community resilience response to Covid-19. This included supporting the Community Support service by collating and updating information on essential services available to support people living in Conwy, such as food delivery services, prescription delivery and food bank provision. During the period April – September 2020 5160 people accessed our webpage to view our food delivery lists.

At the start of August we completed a mapping exercise of what activities were available both face to face and online for people living in Conwy. Using that data we were then able to identify where the gaps were and started facilitating and piloting activities online via Zoom, for both members of the community and local care homes to participate in. Sessions included Bingo, chair exercises, yoga and singing. During the period of April – September 2020 we delivered 16 different sessions of which 161 people attended. We received some fantastic feedback including the following:

Singing Participant – *“I think its amazing the work you guys are doing at this current time. Trying to lift the mood of everyone and getting people smiling. Good work”*.

As not everyone has access to a digital device to enable them to access online activities, we developed a 'Wellbeing Pack' in August 2020 which contained lots of useful information and activities that people could do from the comfort of their own home, in order to help boost their physical and mental wellbeing. The packs were distributed via our In-house team to people in receipt of care and via our partners such as Cartrefi Conwy and Transport for Wales. From the launch in August up until the end of September the pack had received 1,423 views online and 275 hard copies were distributed to various residents living in Conwy.

4.5.4 Supporting Mental Health and Preventing Homelessness

Since the start of the pandemic, we have been working more closely with other agencies to address needs that go beyond the need for provision of accommodation.

This will be picked up as part of the work that is to start imminently in the preparation of Conwy's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), key elements of which are the prioritisation of homelessness prevention activities and working in partnership with key agencies and services.

4.5.7 Co-produce inclusive mental health services in the community for LGBTQ groups, adults with autism and carers

A series of stakeholder groups were held prior to March 2020 that included an adults with autism group but unfortunately the session booked with Unique to focus on the transgender and LGBTQ community did not go ahead. However, this work has influenced the next stage of service change and commissioning intent to develop a Recovery College in Conwy, that will support mental health in the community through an educational approach, regardless of diagnosis or identified protected characteristic. Progress slowed during the pandemic but remains the ambition of the service and a project plan is in place with Conwy Mind to develop this approach. The courses will be co-produced and designed with service users.

4.7.3 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Code of Practice

An Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Code of Practice (COP) has been consulted on and is due to be implemented from Sept 2021. Conwy and Denbighshire Local Authorities have drafted a local action plan but await the final Code of Practice prior to consulting with stakeholders.

4.8.7 Develop 'Dancing the Decades' tour with Dawns i Bawb for care homes in Conwy

A second tour was due to take place before Easter 2021 but this was postponed due to the pandemic. The remaining funds were used to pay the dancers to create a film version of the performance which was sent out to every home that was or was going to be part of the tour (see list below). They also received a DVD of three 15 minute movement sessions. The DVD is as much like the performance as possible with a mix of performance and participatory work. The team have also delivered live Zoom sessions once a month to some of the care homes and sent a pre-recorded session through YouTube.

1. Bay Court Kinmel Bay
2. Chasely House Colwyn Bay
3. Church Manor Abergele
4. Coed Craig Colwyn Bay
5. Merton Place Colwyn Bay
6. Queen Elizabeth Court Llandudno
7. Ty Cariad Abergele
8. Hafan Gwydir, Llanrwst
9. Bronafallen, Cerrigydrudion

4.8.8/9 Become a Dementia-friendly organisation

A steering board was established and was meeting regularly before the pandemic struck, which delayed progress for a while. However, we were subsequently able to submit our application to become a dementia friendly organisation to the Alzheimer's Society with the evidence of progress made to date and have received confirmation that we are now a Dementia-Friendly organisation.

Work has also been undertaken to develop reminiscence activity packs for 15 care homes covering themes relating to the 60's, 70's and 80's, which included work with the BCUHB Young Onset Dementia Group.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Health, Wellbeing and Social Care Objective:

- Converted our theatre to a Covid hospital, then mass vaccination centre
- Created a temporary mortuary facility within one of our commercial units on behalf of the North Wales region
- Used our coach park to deliver a mass testing centre
- Established a brand new Community Support Service to deliver food and prescriptions to vulnerable and isolated residents during lockdowns which received a wealth of thanks and appreciation from recipients and their families
- Established a Test Trace & Protect 7-day-a-week service with North Wales partners utilising furloughed staff and undertaking a mass-recruitment and on-boarding exercise all undertaken 100% virtually
- Developed online support for older people to help them take up opportunities to boost their physical and mental wellbeing
- Rebranded and adapted Ffit Conwy Leisure offer with online workouts, classes and exercise tips
- Co-ordinated 1,166 resident vaccinations in 58 Care Homes with 95% of residents vaccinated
- Co-ordinated and distributed PPE to all care providers including: 3.5 million boxes of gloves, 1.6 million boxes of masks and 1.5 million rolls of aprons
- Worked closely with our care home providers, Environmental Health Officers and Local Authority surveillance group to inform our local decision making about visiting restrictions/arrangements which helped to avoid blanket restrictions being put in place

- Developed and implemented a Libraries call and collect service and ran online story-telling sessions

Work Delayed Due to the Pandemic

4.7.1 Neurodiversity Policy

4.7.2 Implementation of Sunflower Lanyard scheme to support hidden disabilities

Objective 5: We will improve **Personal Security** and Access to Justice

Priority Areas:

5.1 Work with our North Wales partners to increase confidence in Hate Crime awareness and reporting

5.2 Address VAWDASV by implementing relevant areas of the strategy by 2021

5.3 Improve awareness of personal safety and safeguarding

5.1.1/3 Signposting Network for Hate Crime

The updated Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Policy was shared at an Equality Champions meeting where it was proposed that members were a natural point of contact in their services through their work and involvement with Equality. They would not expect to be an expert on the subject but be able to listen to and signpost staff in their service as appropriate using the contact listed in the policy, as would be the role of any Conwy team member. Social Care have identified Champions to be trained as part of their Ask and Act training and these contacts are also linked into the Policy.

We have continued to raise awareness of Hate Crime during Hate Crime Awareness week and published examples of hate crime and links to stories as part of awareness raising. Postmasters and Social Media Posts are sent out during Hate Crime Awareness Week to the public and internal staff.

We promote the live fear free helpline at every opportunity. Our Community Safety Partnership send out regular tweets promoting

the number and we include it on any literature we send out. This number is included on the DEWIS website and all third sector organisations who help victims.

5.1.2/3 Community Tension Monitoring

The Community Safety Partnership have been working to manage and monitor any community tensions. There has been an increase in neighbourhood tensions due to the lockdowns and by working in partnership we have managed those tensions. We have also supported North Wales Police and the Community Cohesion leads with updates on any community tensions identified around the Black Lives Matter demonstrations during the year.

5.1.5 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

We have continued to raise awareness of Modern Day Slavery and send out regional messages about reporting anything suspicious. There have been multiagency operations ongoing in Car washes and nail bars and in preparation for the campsites reopening fully we shared information on Modern slavery and County lines to raise awareness with them and share reporting mechanisms should they notice anything suspicious.

5.2.1 Safeguarding Training

All of our mandatory Safeguarding modules are accessible from a variety of devices through the Learning@Wales platform. Since the Covid-19 pandemic and not being able to meet in person, all employees are sent an Induction pack and advised that they must complete their mandatory Safeguarding Ask and Act Level 1 module within three months of commencement in Conwy. We have also identified roles which require Ask and Act Level 2 (more in-depth training) which are being delivered by the Social Care Workforce Development Team.

5.2.2/3/5 Domestic Abuse Awareness

Our mandatory safeguarding training for staff includes training on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and this training is continuing. We have also continued to promote the Safe Lives helpline and ensure local reporting mechanisms have been put in place. We have also been promoting the 'Ask for Ani' in local pharmacies. This alerts the staff in pharmacies to the potential issue and will enable them to take the victim through to a safe space where help can be gained. The Community Safety Partnership have been attending events, colleges and organisations to speak about Domestic abuse and raising awareness about reporting. The

Community Safety Partnership has also been working regionally on the International Abuse raising awareness day on 25th November with multiple events planned across Conwy and Denbighshire.

We continue to work in partnership to manage the levels of repeat victims of Domestic Abuse through the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) process, which has seen an increase in cases but which enables the support of victims at an earlier stage. We continue to fund 4 full time Independent Domestic Violence Advisors across Conwy and Denbighshire and there is also a Young Person's sexual advisor based within the assault referral centre.

5.3.10/11/14 Reduce Crime and Disorder

We have been working closely with Victim Support over the last 12 months to ensure the messages about help being available are widely shared. We have been working regionally on sharing clear and consistent messages and we have promoted support for Modern Day Slavery, Domestic Abuse and sexual violence and Prevent counter terrorism messages.

We continue to attend the Offender Management Groups and have expanded the monitoring to cover repeat domestic abuse offenders. We have managed to continue restorative justice conferences remotely and have found them very useful in lower level crimes in supporting the victims to move on from the incidents.

Objective 6: Increase Access to **Participation** and improve diversity in decision making

Priority Areas:

- 6.1 Increase awareness of the importance of diversity in political representation and decision making bodies
- 6.2 Public transport providers* to provide training to staff to ensure they meet the needs of disabled people (**Note: Conwy County Borough Council does not provide public transport but is involved in some non-commercial routes and community transport*)
- 6.3 Ensure engagement is inclusive

6.4 Access to services should be supported by appropriate language support

6.1.6 Co-Option onto Council Committees

Co-option onto Council Committees is limited but the co-option on the Standards Committee demonstrates a gender balance. Co-options onto the Governance and Audit Committee follow a similar process. Member champions have been appointed to represent carers, older people, mental health and disability and they are consulted with as part of the normal decision making process and the report template has been amended to prompt consultation with the appropriate Members. The Modernisation portfolio holder has a responsibility for Equalities within their portfolio and actively involve themselves in the equality agenda.

6.1.8 Conwy's Youth Council

Schools Councils continue to be an active part of school life.

Conwy is currently looking for a new group of young people from educational settings to form a Youth Council to restart the Council as many of the previous representatives have now moved on.

6.1.9 Carers Voice in Decision Making

Services that support carers use effective engagement methods to work in person-centred ways and to gather insights which steer ongoing service development. A recent example would be the local delivery of the Welsh Government Carer respite grant, which has involved partner organisations who have consulted with carers regarding their preferences around short breaks, with a view to providing a more flexible range of tailored short breaks according to individual need. Recent national campaigns via Carers Wales have been promoted to raise awareness of Carers Rights across the sector.

6.2.1 Sustainable Transport Initiatives - Fflecsi Services

The Fflecsi Dyffryn Conwy demand responsive public transport service which replaced seven poorly performing timetabled services has operated for seven months now and passenger numbers continue to grow daily and the Dyffryn Conwy Service continues to demonstrate the highest passenger growth and journeys of all the Fflecsi services across Wales. The increased flexibility of the

service has better met working people's needs and there has also been an increase in young people using the service for "school holiday work" and social purposes. Replacing costly timetabled regular services to some villages and replacing them by Fflecsi has been positive and has also resulted in savings in cost, empty bus miles and a considerable carbon savings. The service has seen a significant shift from concessionary pass holder passengers to fare paying passengers. In November 2019 there were 73% card holders and 26% fare payers. In May 2021 there were 39% card holders and 60% fare payers. A staycation leaflet was launched which encouraged residents and visitors to use the service for journeys to attractions and there has been a demand for journeys from the caravan parks in and around Llanrwst to Betws y Coed early evenings.

The aim is to address the anticipated pressures of staycation, reduce car usage and parking pressures which in turn contribute to the greener travel. Worked with the Social Care Wellbeing Team to design a programme of trips out using Fflecsi to help address the apprehensiveness of some to venture out after lockdown.

6.2.3/5 Accessible Bus Transport

The Department of Transport have recently issued a further exemption for vehicles used for school transport until March 2022. Welsh Government and WLGA are lobbying the DfT in respect of the unintended consequences of the changes of regulation. In the meantime we are working with providers towards a realistic timescale for transitioning vehicles to become PSVAR compliant. This will need to factor in current challenges around COVID and climate change requirements.

A requirement for all staff of public bus service providers to have completed disability access training has been incorporated into the contract template and is now issued as part of contract renewal. All current service providers do already provide disability access training to their staff as standard training.

6.3.1 Promote Training on Engagement and Consultation

Community involvement training is included on the corporate learning and development plan, and offered twice a year. Training was refreshed in 2021 to include more techniques and tips for digital / virtual engagement in light of the pandemic and to reflect the Socio Economic Duty. Further work is taking place regionally to ensure that anonymised involvement feedback is shared between

organisations – particularly to support the ambition to improve involvement with seldom heard groups.

6.3.3 Engagement with Local Disability Forums

We have worked with Conwy Connect to engage a wider representation of the disability community and we are utilising this as a means for feedback on commissioning ideas / proposals for commissioning & re-commissioning. Co-commissioning is a key aspect of the Social Care Commissioning Toolkit and this sets our aspiration to move to co-planning and co-design of service, co-delivery and co-monitoring and review. Methods and key considerations for engagement with service users and wider citizens at each stage of the commissioning cycle is included in the Social Care Commissioning Toolkit which was produced in consultation and co-production is now embedded in our commissioning approach and is now business as usual.

6.3.4a Digital Inclusion Support

Improving digital connectivity is one of the highest priorities for communities in Conwy County, in particular those in rural areas, to support economic development, education, social care and even long-term solutions to healthcare provision. LFFN (Local Full Fibre Network) aims to create a local digital infrastructure for the economy to thrive and for Citizens to have the connectivity they need in both town and rural areas using the funding available from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). CCBC sites include Council owned properties, Town and Community Council venues as well as libraries and community centres. CCBC have 45 sites originally approved for the project, of these 12 have been fully migrated to full fibre and 27 are in the process of installation. As well as these CCBC sites there were a further 32 sites within Conwy county from other Organisations participating in the LFFN programmes, these included GP surgeries, medical centres, health clinics and resource centres. Of these 25 have had the fibre installed and connected and 7 are in the process of installation. All these connected sites help extend the fibre network to communities and thus enable the people living and working in them a better opportunity to get access to superfast broadband connections.

Providing information and support for members of the public who have restricted digital access is vital and libraries provide public access computers, WiFi and printers in addition to staff support. Funding has been made available from Welsh Government to

reconfigure library buildings to provide private and confidential spaces with computers where customers can remotely connect to Council and other services.

6.3.5 Encouraging learning and speaking Welsh

We have appointed a Welsh Promotion & Development Officer who will be working with Council staff, schools and the public to promote and develop the Welsh language in the county.

During 2020, a new group, the Welsh Language Steering Group, was formed which considers and discusses matters relating to the Welsh language in the Council, whether they be good practice to celebrate and develop, or any matter that is below the standard that we aim for, matters that need improving within a specific service or a specific aspect of our work etc.

Conwy County Borough Council staff have been able to take advantage of an innovative scheme to learn Welsh thanks to a partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh. Following on from the success seen with the Work Welsh courses between September 2018 and March 2019, when 73 members of staff and 2 Councillors attended Welsh lessons through the scheme, we were chosen to be part of a pilot scheme during 2019-2020, and part of a tailor made scheme again during 2020-2021. The scheme is part of the National Centre For Learning Welsh's 'Work Welsh' programme. The Council is extremely grateful of receiving such an enormous investment from the Centre in order to develop Council staff's Welsh language skills. During this last year, lessons have all been on-line and we are proud of the fact that 48 members of staff have been able to continue to develop their Welsh language skills and contribute in a small, but important way, towards a million of Welsh speakers by 2050.

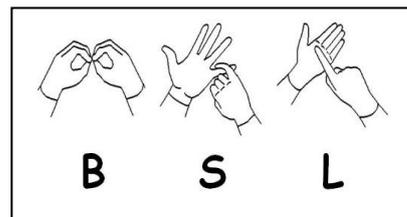
At the beginning of 2021, we launched a Speaking Welsh in the Workplace Scheme, where a learner on Intermediate level is paired with a fluent Welsh speaker in order to chat informally. At the moment, we have 9 pairs who meet regularly as part of the Speaking Welsh in the Workplace Scheme.

6.4.1 Sensory Loss Policy

In response to the Wales Audit Office report "Speak My Language" a Sensory Loss Policy was issued which reflects the checklist outlined in the report.

6.4.2 British Sign Language (BSL) Provision

We continue to provide BSL interpreter service via Sign Solutions and the icon is pinned to the top of every page on our website. The InterpreterLive! contract was renewed again, providing 720 minutes of support per month. During 20/21 the service has been mainly accessed via the website as council buildings have been closed for extensive periods. CDTSS (Conwy Deaf Translation Support Service) still operate BSL interpreter sessions weekly which Conwy County Borough Council funds. COSSS (Centre of Sign- Sight-Sound) have also recently gained funding for a Level 4 Interpreter to provide an advocate / translator type service across North Wales, including Conwy. We continue to deliver training to staff on sensory loss and raise awareness of the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information and Conwy's Accessible Communications Guide for Professionals. The website accessibility project also involved checks by people using BSL and with visual impairments.



6.4.10 New model of English as an Additional Language

The new model of English as an Additional Language (EAL) service delivery to Conwy schools is now fully embedded. Conwy schools have:

- a specific EAL Service Teacher allocated to work with their school's EAL Lead
- nominated their own EAL Lead for their school – often the ALNCo, sometimes the Head teacher, More Able & Talented (MAT) Coordinator or for one school, an HLTA. Schools are encouraged to nominate a member of the SLT or ALNCo to be able to work on an Action Plan for their school
- access to a dedicated School Management Review Tool for EAL on the Cynnal website plus professional support from their EAL Service Teacher to audit their own provision for EAL and draw up an Action Plan for next steps
- a referral process for direct EAL Service Teacher support for their EAL learners, in 2 stages: New Arrivals referral form; Second block of support referral form
- support (as requested) for meetings with parents & guardians and support for home to school communication
- access to training & resources via the EAL Service Network on Hwb

- EAL Service support to help carry out their school's Annual Assessment of EAL from Stage A (New to English) through to Stage E (Fluent)

6.4.11 Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme

Four of the families welcomed by Conwy as part of the SVPRS (Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme) currently have school age children attending Conwy schools. Five children are now in primary schools and three young people are attending secondary schools. The Conwy EAL (English as an Additional Language) Service is a cross-authority service working together with Denbighshire. The SVPRS education funding available for Year 1 only, was used carefully to extend the length of time it was possible to pay for 2 Bilingual Teaching Support Assistants (BTSAs), speaking Arabic & English, to support schools, the children and young people in education. The posts came to a close on 31.08.21 (instead of 31.03.20).

6.5.2 Website Upgrade for Accessibility

A project was successfully delivered between March 2020 and September 2021 to improve the website in terms of content and technical responsiveness. This was in order to meet the regulatory requirements and ensure partial compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA standard. Extensive consultation was undertaken with different protected groups and opportunities presented for users to test the system during the development phase to provide feedback to the work done at each stage. Work will continue post-project to further increase accessibility and compliance.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Participation Objective:

- Improved engagement and partnership working with Town & Community Councils
- Re-worked our Economic Growth Strategy to support recovery post-Covid in the short, medium & long-term
- Won Welsh Tutor of the Year and came third as Employer of the Year in the Work Welsh National Awards

Work Delayed Due to the Pandemic

6.3.2 Equality Impact Assessment Policy update

6.3.4 Annual meeting with Conwy Deaf Translation Support Service (CTDSS) and Vision Support Sight Loss Group to feedback on progress on Equality Objectives

6.4.3 Review of The Big Word provision for interpreter and translation facilities for languages other than Welsh and English (carried over to Year 2)

Objective 7: Develop our knowledge and understanding of the socio-economic duty (when guidance becomes available) to identify the key areas of impact to be addressed under each of our other 6 objectives

7.1.1/3 Increase Socio-economic Duty (SeD) Awareness

Workshops on the new Socio-economic duty were developed following a delay in the implementation of the SeD which came into effect on 1 April 2021. Workshops were delivered during March/April 2021 for staff, management and members, with specific sessions held for SMT, Cabinet, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs and an overview provided to the Managers Forum.

A revised Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) tool was developed in conjunction with our North Wales Public Sector Equality Network partners. The new tool was issued in March to incorporate the requirements of the SeD and also consider the cumulative impact on decisions. The democratic report template was updated to incorporate consideration of the SeD in addition to the Public Sector Equality Duty. An updated EqIA Workshop using the new tool has been developed and training commenced from June 2021, delivered quarterly.

Other actions and outcomes of note under the Socio-economic Duty Objective:

- Social Care Hardship Fund - Owners of care home services and of care home services with nursing, have been able to apply for financial support through the Welsh Government's Economic Resilience Fund. The funding will help meet the increased costs of eligible voids and unexpected additional costs, which are being incurred by adult social services as a result of Covid-19. Following an additional sum of £22.7 million, Local authorities are working with adult social care providers to draw down the extra funding based on the new

costs that are identified. The Welsh Government has now agreed a second tranche of funding for the period July to September 2020, extended to March 2021 to continue the provision of support towards these costs.

- The Covid 19 support grant was launched in May 2020. The fund is open for community groups who need funding assistance to begin operating safely during Covid 19 or for projects that will assist in improving wellbeing within our rural communities of Conwy. The scheme had a total of £10,000 to support the rural communities of Conwy. Up to now 7 applications have been approved- examples of support include:
 - Betws Yn Rhos Community Council – Shelving to transform phone box into swap and share; Items that can be swapped are books, jigsaws and board games.
 - Golygfa Gwydyr – 10x therapy wellbeing sessions.
 - Penmaenmawr Community Library – gazebo to keep people dry whilst queuing, carpet protectors for hygiene and an iPad for Track and Trace. Ensuring they can re-open to serve their community.
 - Ysbyty Ifan Community Council – Tables and PPE
 - Capel Garmon Community Council - Chairs for outside use to socially distance during catch ups.
 - Clwb yr Efail – Purchase of equipment for the club to re-open safely.

4. Specified Employment Information

4.1 Employment Monitoring Reports

Conwy Council's annual employment monitoring reports are published on our website each year. The Specific Duties, set out in the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011, require public organisations to report annually on the following areas for each protected characteristic:

- Employees working for us on 31 March each year
- Applicants for employment over the last year
- Employees who have applied internally to change position (tracking successful and unsuccessful applicants)

- Applicants for training and how many succeeded
- Employees who completed the training
- Employees who are involved in grievance procedures as a complainant or as a person against whom a complaint was made
- Employees subject to disciplinary procedures
- Employees leaving and reasons for leaving

In addition, public organisations must compare men and women employed, broken down by Job, Grade, Pay, Contract type (including permanent and fixed term contracts) and Working patterns (including full time, part time and other flexible working patterns).



These reports are used to review the effectiveness of our employment policies and practices and to consider whether there has been any potential lack of fairness or discrimination. Data which indicates this could be the case in the application of a policy or practice is investigated in more depth and if necessary, remedial action taken to remove it by reviewing the relevant policy or practice. We review all our policies periodically and carry out Equality Impact Assessments using the data from our latest Employment Monitoring Report.

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 the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and confidentiality.

Applicants are required to complete our equality monitoring form as part of e-recruitment and this section is mandatory, although we allow people to state: “prefer not to say”. We have expanded the use of our “self-service” facility which allows staff to amend personal details about themselves at any time and we continue to seek additional ways of improving further the equality data we hold for staff.

Our latest Employment Monitoring Report for 2020–2021 is available on our website under the Equality and Diversity section which can be found [here](#).

We hold the following data for staff in Conwy:

100%	Sex
100%	Age
99.26 %	Marital/civil partnership status
54.07%	Race
49.32%	Disability
44.78%	Religion/Belief
44.45%	Sexual Orientation
39.35%	Transgender

Data captured in all categories has improved further during this period even though this is slow progress. These figures show the number of staff who have provided information on each protected characteristic, not the actual number of people in that group, which is shown in the Employment Monitoring Report. Work continues to improve data collection.

Our latest report for 2020-2021 shows that we employ 4048 permanent or fixed term contract staff (only 43 less than last year), of whom 75% are female and 25% are male; 54% have stated they are married or in a civil partnership; 2% have a disability; 1.31% are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual; 1.73% are Black Minority Ethnic (BME). Our casual workforce is made up of 1846 staff (387 less than last year), comprising 78% female and 22% male. Not all casual staff included in this count will be physically in work at the same time, as they are normally called to work as and when required. These numbers reflect the actual number of people we had on our books on 31 March 2021. The people we employ may fill more than one post and we had 4434 permanent/fixed term posts filled by 4048 people, and 2520 casual posts filled by 1846 people.

We continue to employ more part-time staff (51%) than full time staff (49%). 59% of full time permanent staff are female, and 89% of part time staff are female in permanent or fixed term contract posts. 70% of full time Fixed Term Contract (FTC) staff are females and 89% of FTC part-time staff are female. Casual posts are also predominantly occupied by female staff at 78%.

There were 2566 applications for the 572 positions advertised during 2020-2021, giving an average of 4.49 applicants per vacancy which is only slightly lower than last year when we had 4.6 applications per vacancy. 64% of all applicants were female and 36% male. We attracted 3.98% (102) disabled applicants, which is the same number of applicants as last year. We attracted 1.95% BME applicants, equating to 50 which is an increase on the previous year. 34% of female applicants were shortlisted and 27% of disabled applicants were shortlisted (3.28% of the total shortlisted). 18% of BME applicants were shortlisted (1.06% of the total shortlisted). 316 appointments were made during the year, of which 70% were female and 30% male, 1.9% were disabled, down from 3.46% in the previous year and compared to 1.58% in the workforce. 1.27% were BME (compared to 1.59% in the workforce).



62% of all Sickness, Grievance/Bullying and Disciplinary/Capability cases involved female employees, which is slightly lower than the workforce profile of 75% female and 25% male.

There were a larger number of Sickness, Grievance/Bullying and Disciplinary/Capability cases involving employees within the 45-54 age range (27.27%) and 55-64 age range (26.2%), which has been similar for the last 3 years and is comparably low to the workforce profile for these age ranges at 43.91%.

75% of Grievance/Bullying cases involved males which is high when compared to the workforce profile of 25% male. 63.29% of Sickness absence cases were female which is slightly lower than the workforce profile.

33.33% of Disciplinary/Capability cases involved males which is slightly higher than the workforce profile of 25% males.

There were less voluntary leavers in the period (267) which made up 80% of all leavers, of which 60.84% were female, which is less than the workforce profile. Of those who left involuntary, 55% were staff whose temporary contract had come to an end, 11.67% left due to compulsory redundancy (which is down 9.33% from the previous year), and 33% were dismissed. Of those dismissed, 75% were on ill health grounds. 7 disabled employees left the

organisation in the period, 6 voluntarily. 1 BME employee left during the period. 5 LGB employees left in the period, 3 voluntarily.

Full details and analysis of the data can be found in the Employment Monitoring Report 2020-2021 on our website [here](#).

4.2 Equal Pay and Pay Differences

The Equality Act 2010 requires that women and men are paid on equally favourable terms where they are employed on 'like work' or 'work rated as equivalent' or 'work of equal value'.



Conwy Council carried out an extensive process of job evaluation which was concluded during 2010/11 with the objective of equalising pay in line with the defined terms above.

We conducted an Equal Pay Audit in 2009 as part of the Equality Impact Assessment when undertaking Job Evaluation (JE). This audit included a before and after analysis by gender of old grades and proposed new grades.

In 2010 when the current grading system was implemented, a conscious decision was taken as part of the pay modelling exercise to weight the available budget to lower grade posts on implementation, in recognition of the high number of staff in lower paid jobs, the majority of whom are women. This was welcomed by all Unions at the time.

We have regularly tracked pay gap data since that time and this can be seen in the table below, which shows the progress since then on the pay gap using the same calculation for gender, disability, race and latterly age.

Pay Gap	2009 Pre JE	2009 Post JE	31.3. 2011	31.3. 2015	31.3. 2017	31.3. 2018	31.3. 2019	31.3. 2020	31.3.2 021
Gender Pay Gap range between Grades G01-G12			+1.1-0%	+0.8-+1.9%	-1.8-+0.4%	-1.8-+0.39%	-1.85-+1.2%	-1.9 -+1.08	-1.74 -+1.33
Total Gender Pay Gap Grades G01-G12			+13.1%	+9.3%	+7.53%	+7.15%	+5.47%	+5.47	+5.57
All posts Gender Pay Gap	+16.2%	+15.8%	+8.83%	+6.5%	+4.39%	+3.56%	+2.8%	+3.72	+3.99
Disability Pay Gap Grades G01-G12								-9.6	-13.01
All Posts Disability Pay Gap			-10%		0%	-9.78%	-0.9%	-0.38	-2.07
BME Grades G01-G12							-5.0	-3.65	-2.83
All Posts BME Pay Gap			+2.45%		+6.35%	+5.10%	+8.07%	+8.37	+9.90
Age Pay Gap : Under 50s as % of 50+					-1.37%	-2.47%	-2.21%	-1.12%	-3.37
Age Pay Gap 50+ as % of Under 50s					+1.35%	+2.41%	+2.16%	+1.11%	+3.26

[Note: a negative (-) pay gap demonstrates that the pay gap is favourable for that group when compared to the rest of the group whereas a positive (+) denotes a negative pay gap]

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) recommends that pay gaps of 5% or more should be treated as significant.

With effect from 1 April 2019 a revised pay structure was implemented following the National Joint Council pay settlement for 2018 and 2019, which has reduced the time for lower graded staff to reach the top of grade to reflect that the work is less complex and

therefore takes less time to gain the relevant experience. Therefore, our lowest grades: Grades G01, G02 and G03 only have 2 bands meaning staff will normally progress to the top of scale after 12 months. Grade G04 has 3 bands within grade which normally takes 2 years to reach the top of grade and the remaining Single Status salary bands have 4 bands within a grade, meaning staff will rise to the highest band after 3 years. Progression from one band to the next within grade is dependent upon staff performing satisfactorily but the norm is that people progress on an annual basis (unless they are fast-tracked for outstanding performance or retention purposes with the prior agreement of the Head of Service and Head of Corporate Human Resources, but even then, they remain within the Grade for the post).

We have no bonus schemes in place for this group of staff as they were removed with the implementation of Single Status Terms and Conditions in 2010. Staff receive enhancement payments if they work unsociable hours but this is applied uniformly to all staff in the Council and is automatically paid based on timesheet data.

We have a Market Supplement Policy to ensure that if our Job Evaluated posts fall behind the market rate for specific posts, we can apply a supplement to the grade to bring it in line with market rates. Any such arrangements are objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators using appropriate data sources from both inside and outside Local Government. It is the Council's policy that any such additional payments are kept to a minimum and are reviewed on a regular basis so that they may be withdrawn where no longer considered necessary. There are no known market supplements operating currently.

We do not operate performance or competence related pay (other than described above within grade). New starters are expected to start on the bottom scale of the post unless there is a justifiable reason for them to commence on a higher scale within grade. In those circumstances, approval must be given by Corporate Human Resources. Pay protection arrangements exist where there is a redundancy situation and in accordance with the Council's policy, staff are entitled to 12 month's pay protection if their salary is reducing by one grade or where the job has changed as a result of a minor restructure which affects their Job Evaluation score by one grade. Any redeployment to a post with a decrease of more than

one grade will result in redundancy or the revised pay for the grade being implemented on commencement in the new post.

We pay stand-by and call out allowances as and when staff are required to work outside of their normal hours and work has been undertaken to standardise payments.

Equal pay is about paying people the same for work of equal value. Through the implementation of our Job Evaluation Scheme, we are confident in being able to state that we do not have an equal pay issue in Conwy County Borough Council. All our jobs under Single Status are scored using the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) Scheme which measures posts according to the level of supervision, knowledge, creativity required, complexity of contacts with others, the resources they are responsible for, the level and impact of decisions they make and work context. Similarly our Chief Officer posts are scored under HAY and pay for Teachers is negotiated nationally.



We have recently produced an Equal Pay Audit Report for the period 2018-2021 which further analyses pay data by protected characteristic.

A **pay gap** relates to the difference in pay between groups of people with different protected groups, eg, the difference between what men typically earn in an organisation compared to what women earn, irrespective of their role or seniority. Therefore any pay gap is more a reflection of our workforce profile than about unequal rewards for people with different protected characteristics doing the same job.

In Conwy, we employ significantly more women than men (75%) and more of our staff are part-time (51%) than full time which demonstrates that we offer greater employment flexibility but this does have an impact on the pay gap and we would not want to remove that flexibility that so many of our staff value in achieving a work-life balance.

Gender Pay Gap

If we look at Grades G01-G12, the gender pay difference between grades is fairly constant at between -1.74% and +1.33%, indeed in

Grades G01, G02, G04, G05, G08 and G09, pay marginally favours women, suggesting that there is no substantial gender pay gap between individual Grades G01-G12 and the gap of 5.57% for all single status grades G01-G12 is likely to be attributed to the large number of women being employed in G01 (women in G01 account for 31.25% of all staff employed in grades G01-G12). This is not uncommon in the public sector due to the labour intensive nature of the work undertaken. Using the same calculation, there is an overall gender pay gap of 3.99% when including all staff employed by Conwy County Borough Council. This shows an increase of 1% on last year and is the first time there has been an increase since this was being measured in 2009 but is still below 5% and will need to be monitored if this trend continues.

On 6 April 2017 The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 came into force, requiring all organisations employing 250 or more employees to report their Gender Pay Gap, using a prescribed calculation, on their website and on the designated government website at <https://www.gov.uk/report-gender-pay-gap-data>. In Wales, public sector organisations have been exempt from this requirement as they already have the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011 which requires them to report on the pay gap not only for gender but also for the other protected groups.

Conwy County Borough Council has calculated its gender pay gap using the prescribed calculation in the 2017 Regulations as at 31 March 2021 which shows a slightly different figure to those above as follows:

Gender Pay Gap National Calculation as at 31 March 2021

	Female Hourly Rate	Male Hourly Rate	Difference in Hourly Rate	Mean Gender Pay Gap as a %	Median Gender Pay Gap as a %
Mean (Average) Gender Hourly Rate	14.52	15.45	0.93	-6.04	
Median (Middle) Gender Hourly Rate	10.59	12.19	1.60		-13.14

(With Teachers)

	Upper Quartile	Upper Middle Quartile	Lower Middle Quartile	Lower Quartile	Total
% of Males	26.07%	34.92%	27.82%	14.04%	
Number of Males	312	418	333	168	1231
% Females	73.93%	65.08%	72.18%	85.96%	
Number of Females	885	779	864	1029	3557

(With Teachers)

The mean gender pay gap uses an average calculation using the prescribed categories of staff to include. The median calculation puts all staff in a column from lowest to highest paid and takes the middle hourly rate for both men and women and compares the difference. Whilst we have followed the calculation set out in legislation, ACAS has also published guidance on what to include and exclude in this calculation which differs which means that organisations may still not be applying a consistent calculation to make fair comparisons.

We have identified further actions in our Strategic Equality Plan action plan to explore the issues around job and gender segregation which we believe is one of the main reasons why a gender pay gap still exists.

Age Pay Gap

We have split the age data into two categories, those below 50 years of age and those 50 and above. In Grades G01-G12, the pay gap in the under 50s as a percentage of over 50s ranges from -1.13% to +3.29% which is negligible and similarly the gap in the over 50s as a percentage of the under 50s ranges from -3.41% to +1.12%. Head of Service level posts show a pay gap in favour of those under 50 of -5.18% and Head Teachers, Deputy Head Teachers and Teaching staff on Soulbury conditions show a pay gap in favour of under 50s of between 6.67% to 12.60%. The overall pay gap shows that employees under 50 are positively favoured by -3.37%, with 59.45% of the total workforce is below 50 years of age.

Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Pay Gap

Historical data shows fluctuations in the pay gap for BME staff ranging from 2.45% in 2011 to 9.90% in 2021. This figure has gradually increased since 2011 and is higher than the gender pay gap for all staff at 3.99%. It is possible that the figures are affected (a) because we only hold monitoring data for 54% of the workforce on race; (b) there is an element of occupational segregation as 75% of our BME staff are employed in Grades G01-G05 (compared to the total workforce of 67% in the same grade span); and (c) the numbers are very small and therefore it is difficult to draw any statistical conclusions from the data. This will however need to be considered further when we conduct the next Equal Pay Audit.

Disability Pay Gap

Historical data shows fluctuations in the pay gap for disabled people ranging from -10% to 0% demonstrating that if anything, the pay gap for disabled people favours disabled people. However the reliability of this data is affected by the fact that we only hold disability data for 49.32% of our workforce and therefore it is difficult to draw any statistical conclusions from the data.

We do not have pay gap data for the remaining protected groups as the data set is very small and is therefore less meaningful. We will continue to work on improving our collection of data where there are gaps to improve reporting.

5. Conclusion

This reporting period has been an unprecedented time for Local Government in ensuring delivery of services, which have been even more important to the people of Conwy. The Authority's approach to Covid response was audited by Audit Wales and we received very positive feedback. Despite the pandemic and putting some actions on hold, we have not only delivered against our corporate objectives but in many cases exceeded them, obtaining the highest standards of accreditation across a variety of services.

For the first year of our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, we identified 182 actions, some of which were one-off and some to be

undertaken over a longer period and were regarded as long term. 129 actions (71%) were completed successfully and/or regarded as ongoing, with a further 30 actions (17%) started but not finished and 22 actions (12%) not started, mainly due to other workload pressures as a result of the pandemic. These actions will be carried over to Year 2 or 3 as appropriate. The four year action plan for SEP 2020-2021 identified a total of 253 specific actions to help achieve our Equality Objectives. Over the course of the plan, further actions are likely to be identified as issues affecting different protected characteristics are highlighted in Conwy through consultation and engagement and, as has been the case during the pandemic, through the reports referred to in Section 2, which will include other equality actions, such as the Race Equality Action Plan and LGBTQ+ action plan being developed by Welsh Government.

As a large and complex organisation, we are also likely to identify further actions as a result of other Plans and Strategies developed over the course of this Plan, including our Corporate Plan which is currently being developed for publication in next year covering the period 2022-2027, and these will also have their own reporting processes. We have therefore, in this report, given a flavour of the work we have been doing but this is by no means an exhaustive list of the exceptional work we do every day to support our citizens.

We remain committed to continuous improvement in the area of equality and diversity, and have come to see, particularly during the pandemic, the differential impact some decisions can have on minority groups. We will strive to improve fairness, inclusivity, transparency, access and equity for all in both service delivery and employment, whilst ensuring that we manage our budgets and resources efficiently in a continuously challenging and ever changing environment.

