

**Cynllun Cydraddoldeb
Strategol
CRYNODEB
Strategic Equality Plan
SUMMARY
2024 - 2028**

“Trin pawb fel unigolion”

“Treating everyone as individuals”

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd



Anyone can access **The County Conversation** to share views and ideas about the County or your local area.



Here's the link to our [County Conversation webpage](#)

Here's the link to the [Conwy Facebook page](#)



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We are happy to provide this document in alternative formats including braille, large print and audio.

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1 Introduction

1.1 One of our citizen Outcomes outlined in our [Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027](#) is:

People in Conwy are informed, included and listened to and can actively contribute to a community where their background and identity are valued and respected.

1.2 We want the future to change for the better. Through our commitment to equality and diversity, we will adapt the way we work across all sectors of the community so that there are a variety of accessible and tailored options for local citizens to communicate, collaborate and engage with our services. By improving the way we work with communities, our aim is that the voice of Conwy citizens will be heard, and they will play an active role in what happens within their community. There will be strong community networks based on principles of trust and respect for local diversity.

1.3 We aim to meet this outcome by developing plans to support our Diversity in Democracy commitment, improve public participation and the accessibility and transparency of democratic decisions. We also aim to meet this outcome by engaging, developing and consulting on our Strategic Equality Plan. We see tackling inequality as an underpinning theme in all that we do – from tackling poverty, access to education, good health and health care, appropriate housing, feeling safe and being listened to. All our key decisions are therefore assessed to understand the impact they have on equality – this is called an Equality Impact Assessment, or EQIA for short.

1.4 As a public body we must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011. The Equality Act protects people against unfair treatment (discrimination) because of their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are referred to as the 9 protected characteristics.

1.5 Types of Discrimination

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- a. **Direct discrimination** - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- b. **Indirect discrimination** - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
- c. **Harassment** - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- d. **Victimisation** - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment

- e. **Discrimination by association** – treating someone less favourably than others, because of someone they are associated with
- f. **Discrimination by perception** – treating someone less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic they are thought to have, regardless of whether this perception by other is actually correct or not
- g. **Discrimination arising from a disability** – treating a disabled person less favourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability and the treatment cannot be objectively justified
- h. **Failure to make reasonable adjustments (Disability only)** – a disabled person can experience discrimination if the employer or organisation doesn't make a reasonable adjustment

Discrimination is not always obvious and can be subtle and unconscious, this is known as **unconscious bias**. This stems from a person's general assumptions about the abilities, interests and characteristics of a particular group that influences how they treat those people. Such assumptions or prejudices may cause people to apply requirements or conditions unwittingly that put those in particular groups at a disadvantage.

1.6 Regardless of the legislation, our Strategic Equality Plan aims to publicly state our commitment and drive to be an organisation that actively seeks to improve the lives of people with protected characteristics. Our Corporate vision is to be a progressive county creating opportunity, and in order to achieve this we want to help create a more inclusive society that tackles discrimination and actively promotes equality and diversity. We cannot achieve this alone and we will continue to work with communities and other organisations to create real and meaningful change. We have detailed how we developed our plan and the actions will take over the next four years in our Strategic Equality Plan 2024 -2028 and the supporting action plan. This summary version aims to be an 'at a glance' summary that highlights the key themes we will focus on. The full report can be found on our website (*hyperlink to be added*)

2 Our Objectives

Objective 1: Outcomes in education learning and wellbeing are improved

- 1.1 All Children and young people attend schools regularly and achieve their learning potential
- 1.2 Children and young people educated in childcare settings through to early education achieve their learning potential
- 1.3 Children and young people are safe and feel safe at school, have equal opportunities, and are encouraged to live a healthy lifestyle
- 1.4 To support young people to become positive role models within their communities and society
- 1.5 To support everyone under the age of 25 to access an offer of work, education, training, or self-employment

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

- 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 and other forms of harassment
- 2.4 Increase the number of disabled people in work
- 2.5 Reduce gender segregation (the unequal distribution of men and women working in traditionally gender specific roles)
- 2.6 Improve participation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled people across apprenticeships
- 2.7 Consider the use of positive action measures in recruitment campaigns where specific groups are under-represented
- 2.8 Implement a programme of anti-racism and anti-discrimination within the organisation promoting the value of positive relationships, diversity and inclusion
- 2.9 Address the barriers to employment for diverse communities

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

- 3.1 Take action to address disproportionate negative impact on people with different protected characteristics
- 3.2 Support disabled people and older 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
- 3.4 Improve access to services for Gypsy Travellers and improve engagement to develop trust
- 3.5 Ensure that housing, homelessness and asylum services are inclusive of the specific needs of minority groups including LGBTQ+ people, ethnic minority people and disabled people

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

- 4.1 Ensure health and wellbeing needs of carers are met
- 4.2 Support the Regional Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Board to implement the relevant Welsh Government strategic plan to reduce suicide and self-harm, especially those with protected characteristics who are at higher risk
- 4.3 Evaluate progress on mental health to ensure we are meeting the needs of people with different protected characteristics
- 4.4 Use Social Model of Disability principles in policy and decision making

- 4.5 Implement specific awareness and support for people with neurological conditions
- 4.6 Address barriers to exercise and wellbeing
- 4.7 Increase confidence and support Social Care and other staff to highlight and address racist and other discriminatory behaviour experienced whilst undertaking their role

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

- 5.1 Work with our North Wales partners to increase awareness of Hate Crime and increase confidence in reporting
- 5.2 Work with North Wales partners to reduce incidents of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
- 5.3 Improve awareness of personal safety and safeguarding responsibilities

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

- 6.1 Increase awareness of the importance of diversity in political representation and decision making bodies
- 6.2 Ensure engagement is inclusive to provide a sense of belonging and community
- 6.3 Access to services should be supported by appropriate language support including Welsh, BSL and other languages
- 6.4 Improve access to services by ensuring an offer of alternative means to technology to prevent digital exclusion

Objective 7: Tackle socio-economic disadvantage by offering inclusive services to minimise inequalities of outcome

- 7.1 Increase awareness of the links between poverty and ill health with different protected characteristics
- 7.2 Address anti-social behaviour
- 7.3 Remove barriers experienced by people due to socio-economic disadvantage
- 7.4 Increase support for children and young people living in poverty to improve outcomes

3 Employment and Equal Pay Monitoring

Conwy publishes an annual Employment Monitoring Report on our website to monitor the workforce and potential workforce. This information is used to review the effectiveness of our employment policies and practices and to consider whether there is a need to review our processes and policies where there is any possibility of discrimination.

We have used past employment monitoring information to:

- Develop equality objectives
- Identify any key equality issues which require specific action

- Identify whether the workforce reflects the community it serves
- Provide a mechanism to measure progress year on year
- Identify possible steps to further advance equality or foster good relations

The Equality Act 2010 is the current legislative source on equal pay for the protected characteristic of sex. It requires that women and men are paid on equal terms where they are employed on 'like work' or 'work rated as equivalent' or 'work of equal value'. Our latest Equal Pay Audit provides data for the 5-year period from 2018 to 2023, particularly concentrating on gender, ethnicity and disability. The findings from this work have been used to inform relevant areas of the supporting action plan

4 Policy Assessment

The requirement to assess the impact of policies and practices, is set out in the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011. The Council should ensure it has sufficient evidence to consider whether decisions taken around policies and practices could have a disproportionate impact on people sharing one or more protected characteristic. Conwy has an Equality Impact Assessment process and training to assist officers undertaking an Equality Impact Assessments

5 Procurement

The Council regularly works in partnership with external organisations to share the responsibility for service delivery. When doing this, the Council must ensure that money spent on goods, works and services meet the diverse needs of the customers we serve. Conwy's procurement toolkit sets out the standards to be adhered to during the procurement process.

To encourage partners to value diversity and promote equality, the Council will:

- Incorporate equality principles in terms of reference to ensure that we embed equality within strategies, plan and projects, including identifying responsibility for equality impact assessments
- Lead by example, incorporating the principles of equality in all that we do
- Work together with our partners to embed and mainstream equality within our work

6 Equality Training

We recognise that a single intervention on equalities training is not sufficient to ensure that our employees maintain an up to date awareness and understanding of equality issues. Equality training for all employees is mandated and we provide a base level of equality awareness training through an e-learning module. In addition to this basic awareness training, we target training at specific issues to meet identified needs. Recent examples include training to support the implementation of the Socio-economic Duty, training on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Awareness, Positive Action, Equal Pay, Anti-Racism training and through various employment policy training where equalities is particularly relevant, for example, Recruitment and Selection, Attendance Management, Capability, and Safeguarding.

7 Reviewing and Reflecting

The commitments made in the plan will be subject to a review on an annual basis alongside the Corporate Plan, which will allow us to consider if the plan is still relevant and ensure that it is able to respond to change and further feedback. It will enable us to make any required changes following the intended review by Welsh Government of the Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011 as well as the forthcoming action plan expected from the Disability Task Force. In keeping with the legislation, we will consult on any changes as appropriate.