

# Strategic Equality Plan

## Annual Report

2020-21

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Cyngor **Sir Gâr**  
**Carmarthenshire**  
County Council



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## Foreword to the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-21

We are pleased to present Carmarthenshire County Council's Annual Report for 2020-21 detailing the implementation of our Strategic Equality Plan and our Strategic Equality Objectives. This report outlines our work to implement the first year of our revised SEP and our new Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020-24, which are –

1. Being a leading employer
2. The needs and rights of people with Protected Characteristics shape the design of services
3. Safe and Cohesive communities that are resilient, fair, and equal
4. Improving access to our services and access to our environment.

**Strategic Equality Plans** (SEPs) are important documents that set out how public bodies will consider the needs of groups with 'protected characteristics', as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This is intended to ensure that all individuals receive just and equitable treatment in respect of service delivery and strategy/policy formulation.

Carmarthenshire County Council is a Proud Employer, through the **Stonewall Diversity Champions** programme and during the year, we have worked closely with Stonewall to address key areas noted in the soft audit that we completed in 2019-20. This includes work led by our People Management Team on thorough policy reviews to ensure that we use inclusive language and discussion on learning and development opportunities for our staff. Through our previous membership, we learnt so much as an employer and provider of services and we are now ready to build upon that good work as we prepare to formally submit in 2021-22.

Councillor Cefin Campbell has been the Chair of the **Equality and Diversity Task & Finish Group (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic)** during the year. Members are fully committed to listening to and understanding the key challenges and barriers for the Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic community and both Cefin and I would like to thank the guest speakers and various organisations for their time and feedback.

Our first focus was to consult on our county memorials with a specific focus on Sir Thomas Picton and to prepare recommendations for the Executive Board to consider. I would personally like to thank everyone who took part in the consultation and gave us as a group further evidence to consider.

Our discussions continue and we are looking forward to presenting our further recommendations on areas such as education and employment, to the Executive Board, during 2021. We will of course be reflecting on the work undertaken by the Welsh Government in preparing a national Race Equality Action Plan as part of our discussions.

2020-21 is our first year of implementing our **Diversity and Equality Promotion Calendar and the Flag and illumination protocol**. The aim of the calendar is to provide a standardised

and authorised timetable of key equality and diversity celebratory / designated days. It provides a platform for both internal and external communication, across all the protected characteristics, as noted in the Equality Act 2010. Further details and examples can be seen as part our Strategic Equality Objectives section. We have ensured that our work within the national Community Cohesion programme also links in with the calendar and we will continue to review the dates and events included, to ensure that a wide range of events, days and groups are reflected.

2020-21 has been an unprecedented year, and as a council, we have had to adapt, realign, and recover our services due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**. Carmarthenshire has always had a strong sense of community and this became even more apparent during the lockdown as a number of community groups were established, mainly online through social media platforms, with the aim of supporting vulnerable people in their communities. As we reflect on the impact of the pandemic on our communities and our citizens, we will ensure that due regard is given to our responsibilities under the Equality Act and the Public Sector Duties and that are protected groups are involved in rebuilding and recovering our services.

To close, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Cllr. Cefin Campbell for his work and leadership as the Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs, with specific responsibility for Equality and Diversity. As a local authority, we recognise that there is more work to be done and we look forward to developing partnerships with our communities and with the protected groups to learn more.

**Councillor Ann Davies**

**Executive Board Member (Equalities)**

## Section 1 - Introduction

### Introduction and background

#### Public Sector Equality Duties

##### The General Duty

The aim of the General Duty is to ensure that public authorities and those who carry out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities.

##### Public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

##### Specific duties in Wales

The Equality Act 2010 made provision for Welsh Ministers to be able to make regulations that place specific public sector equality duties on relevant Welsh public authorities listed in Part 2 of Schedule 19 of the Act.

The duties have been developed to be proportionate in design, relevant to need, transparent in approach and tailored to guide relevant Welsh public authorities towards better performance of the general duty. The ambition is to better meet the needs of the citizens of Wales relying on the services provided to them by the public sector.

The Specific Duties in Wales are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and came into force on 6 April 2011 and note that the listed bodies will undertake and develop the following requirements:

- Objectives
- Strategic Equality Plans
- Engagement
- Assessing Impact
- Equality information
- Employment information
- Pay differences
- Staff training
- Procurement
- Annual reporting (by Public Authorities and Welsh Ministers)
- Publishing
- Review
- Accessibility

## Section 2 - Identifying, collecting, and using relevant information

### 2.1 Our communities

#### Statistical background

Carmarthenshire has an estimated population of 186,452 and a population density (population count/area in sq. km) of 77 people per square km. The County is very diverse and rural. It consists of 58 Electoral Wards with 74 Elected Members. Demographic Profiles have been produced of each of the Electoral Wards and for the County which provides a picture of life in the individual communities as well as valuable local information. The profiles will give you information such as:

- Population Statistics
- Population density
- Birth and Death rate
- 2011 Census Data
- Housing Information

The [Ward Profiles](#) can be accessed through the Council's corporate website.

Statistical information provides us with a useful baseline of information; however, the Census results do not provide information on all protected characteristics.

As a local authority, we can access a wealth of data. Our key aim during the preparation of the evidence report was to identify data to support the General Duty in:

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### 2.2 Our staff

Carmarthenshire County Council has been collecting employment data for several years and has developed specific resources to explain to staff why the information is collected and how the data can influence our workplace policies and support for staff. Our detailed Workplace Profile Report can be viewed on our corporate website. Following the publication of the Equality Act 2010, the People Management division have been working to improve the collection of workforce data and we recognise that this is a continuous process.

## **Section 3 – Equality Impact Assessments**

Equality Impact Assessments are a key element of the Strategic Equality Plan and objectives and are integral to all budgetary, policy and strategic decisions. Heads of Service and Budget Managers are required to complete an assessment of all policy decisions as part of the budget setting process. It is also key that assessments are undertaken as part of all policy and strategy developments and that the Organisational Change template is completed when there are HR considerations.

The Policy and Partnership Team are leading on the introduction of an Integrated Assessment. This is due to the fact that the Council has a statutory requirement to complete impact assessments under a number of new and existing legislation.

These requirements are legal obligations for the Council and failure to meet these duties may result in the Council being exposed to legal challenge.

This integrated assessment incorporates the requirements of the following Acts into one Impact Assessment:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) & Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Socio-economic Duty (which came into force on 31 March 2021).

## **Section 4 – Training**

The Council's Learning and Development Team prepare an annual Learning & Development Plan which outlines all the training and development opportunities available - including Equality and Diversity opportunities. Line Managers are required to discuss learning and development opportunities as part of staff appraisal and ensure that staff have opportunities to develop professionally.

All new members of staff are required to complete “Engaging Diversity”, an on-line learning module within six months of appointment. All Managers and Senior Managers are required to attend the Behavioural Standards in the Workplace training and, if involved in recruitment activities, Recruitment and Selection Training.

## **Section 5 – Procurement arrangements**

The Policy and Partnership Team work closely with the Procurement Unit to ensure compliance. One of the key documents is the Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQuID). This Information is a template provided by the Value Wales Division of the Welsh Government.

The SQuID has been designed to simplify and standardise the selection stage of procurement whilst improving transparency. This approach also makes it easier for small businesses to tender for public sector contracts. Information in relation to Equalities is included in the SQuID documents and all potential suppliers must complete the section. The SQuID template specifically asks prospective suppliers for information in relation to any findings of unlawful discrimination by an Employment Tribunal, an Employee Appeal Tribunal, or any other court and/or any complaints upheld following an investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or its predecessors (or comparable body in any jurisdiction other than the UK) on grounds of alleged unlawful discrimination. The guidance clearly notes that any prospective suppliers, who hold any findings against them, will not be selected to tender, unless they have provided adequate evidence that they have taken appropriate action to stop it happening again.

Colleagues from Stonewall held a tailored session with our Procurement Team to discuss opportunities to promote equality and diversity within our tender documents and contracts. Pre-tender documents include questions regarding whether a supplier has an equality and diversity policy in place that explicitly bans bullying and harassment on all protected characteristics in the Equality Act.

### **Welsh Government Code of Practice – Ethical Employment in Supply Chains**

The Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Code of Practice has been established by the Welsh Government to support the development of more ethical supply chains to deliver contracts for the Welsh Public Sector.

The Executive Board have also nominated an Ethical Employment Elected Champion, Cllr. David Jenkins.



### Case Study 1: Employee Well-being Advice and Support Centre

Following the lockdown on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, all our employee's roles were adjusted to accommodate the situation at hand. Some were redeployed into areas of need, others were required to work from home whilst adjusting to working, living, and schooling in some cases and there were also staff who weren't able to attend work in any capacity. These significant changes brought challenges and disruption for all staff and in turn heightened levels of anxiety and stress. However, worryingly this was not reflected in the level of referrals we were seeing to the Occupational Health Department in particular management referrals requesting Well-being support.

Following analysis of Occupational Health referrals, Authority sickness figures and through discussion, we identified the requirement for the Employee Well-being Advice and Support Centre (EWA&SC) a self-referral form accessible to all to ensure that all employees, whether working from home, furloughed, redeployed, or shielding could access support when they needed it and without delay. This self-referral service was officially launched on 17 April 2020 and could be accessed via the internal and external intranet, whether in work or at home. The launch was communicated via the Staff news and manager bulletins were also sent to all heads of service and schools. EWA&SC communications were also distributed to all business partners, health and wellbeing champions and publicised widely during DMT'S and various meetings throughout the authority.

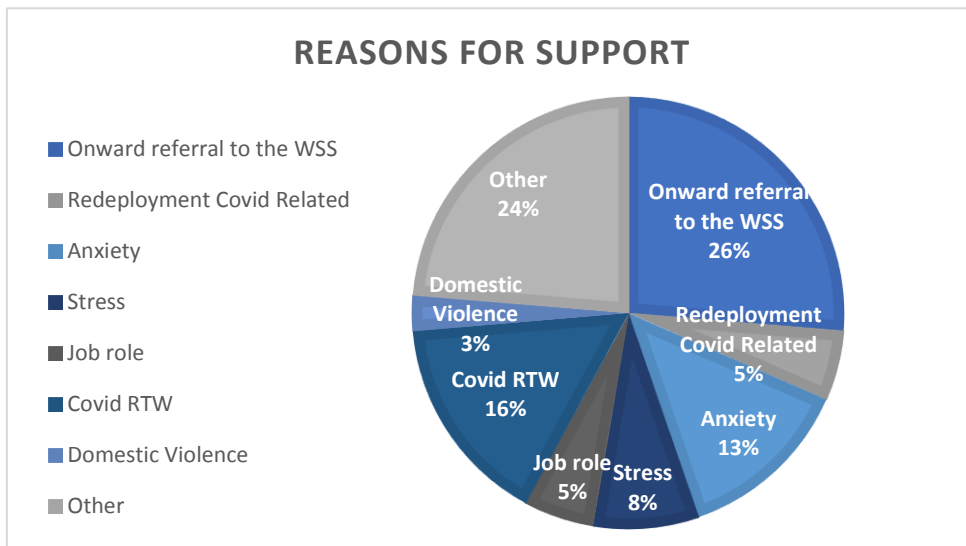
The EWA&SC was accessed via a short Microsoft form, where employees could request support for a variety of reasons. When submissions were received, one of our Clinical team reviewed and contacted the employee to provide: advice and guidance, signposting to relevant support/ external services and/ or onward referral email to manager for further Well-being Support via the Well-being Support Service or Occupational Health Practitioner.

#### Statistics

81% of responses were submitted by **females**.

The service was accessed by all departments but primarily **Education and Children**. With 66% of referrals being submitted by the department

As can be seen from the below table the service was utilised for a plethora of reasons. We used this knowledge to continually improve the information, support links and articles provided to staff on our Health and Wellbeing, Occupational Health and Coronavirus pages.



*\*Other refers to: Pain, Lack of Support, Life after lockdown*

#### Feedback

Feedback was obtained a couple of months after launch to pick up on any areas we were overlooking and to learn ways to improve. However, all feedback from employees was very positive at every stage. Please see outcomes below:

Ease of Use:  
**4.6** out of  
**5**

*Ability to listen  
and respond to  
the concerns of  
the employee:*  
5 out of 5

Politeness and  
Professionalism  
of Practitioner:  
**100%**

Satisfied with  
Support, Advice  
and Guidance  
received:  
**100%**

*“She was lovely, easy to talk to, listened and responded to my concerns.”*

*“Helpful service. Have received help in the past by person, but a telephone consultation was very helpful in reducing my anxiety slightly.”*

## Case Study 2: Organisational Development

During the year, the Organisational Development team have led and supported several initiatives to support our services and staff in our response to the pandemic. In terms of online delivery and addressing physical issues,

- Our Graduate Certificate Programme for Social Workers involved 1 day and 4-day workshops for learners. These workshops were previously held in accessible training rooms, but were moved online during the pandemic, delivered through Microsoft Teams. One of our participants in 2020 who was a wheelchair user, told us that the move to online learning removed the difficulty involved with travelling and physically attending courses, and that this helped them to focus on the learning.
- Research carried out in consultation with our Research in Practice Group, revealed that several participants expressed that online learning helped support their mental health, in situations where physically attending training sessions may have otherwise exacerbated their anxiety conditions.

In our work to support Disabilities

- During 2020, Organisational Development worked with the Wales Union Learning Fund who provided training to our Domiciliary Care Practitioners in developing their digital skills so that they could better support their clients, especially during the pandemic.
- Learners with dyslexia on our All-Wales Induction Framework (delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council) are provided with extra sessions to be able to catch up. We have supported two candidates in this way during 2020. The feedback received, is that the online 1:1 nature of this additional support, has supported these candidates in a private and supportive way, enabling them to meet their learning goals.
- An extensive range of learning and development was provided digitally and made freely available online, to support Care skills and services during the pandemic. This work was recognised by Social Care Wales and included: dementia, autism, positive behavioural support, personal resilience, and wellbeing

As a bilingual employer, we encourage and support our staff to learn and improve their Welsh Language skills

- Carmarthenshire County Council won 'Welsh Employer of the Year 2020' in the Learn Welsh Awards, awarded by Aberystwyth University



- A Welsh language learning area on the intranet was published, providing easy access to an extended range of Welsh language support and formal language courses for learners (compared to 2019/20), which correlates with an increased uptake in the registration of learners onto Welsh language courses during 2020/21. We also link to resources from the National Centre and Say Something in Welsh, where audio resources are used to support visually impaired learners. The online provision of courses has facilitated courses to start at different times throughout the year, resulting in learners having quicker and easier access to courses, without needing to wait for the start of the academic year in September.
- We supported candidates on the All-Wales Induction Framework (for Care) who have English as their second language; providing extra sessions and extra resources so that learners felt supported and equal with the other candidates in the cohorts. When referrals, especially for Welsh Language speakers were required, we liaised with other Welsh speaking Tutors to give tailored guidance.
- Our short learning videos created by Organisational Development and available on the Council’s internet, include bilingual subtitles for Welsh and English participants.

**YOU AND YOUR TEAM**

People are facing a range of new challenges. This may mean that they need different support, or the same support provided in a different way.

This section helps you think about what staff might need from you and explore ways in which you can support them to perform.



**Appraisals (Recognise. Grow. Together)**

Effective 1-1 meets are vital to high performing teams. This new tool will support you to hold successful appraisals.



**Managing a Remote Team: A short video to help you to avoid being “remote” as a remote manager. Tips that offer an immediate impact when managing a remote team.**



**Team Wellbeing**

Information and advice to support the wellbeing of you and your team.

## Strategic Equality Objective - The needs and rights of people with Protected Characteristics shape the design of services

### Case study 3: The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

As a council, we have continued to **monitor the impact of the pandemic** across our communities and have ensured that we conveyed key communication messages to our seldom heard groups by sharing information in a wide range of Languages and formats.

Throughout the pandemic, we were aware of analysis published by the Office of National Statistics which showed that **the risk of deaths involving COVID-19** among some ethnic groups, in England and Wales, is significantly higher than that of those of White ethnicity. This difference is partly explained by socio-economic factors, geographical location, and other circumstances, but part of the difference remains unexplained.

This data is on an all-Wales basis and is not available at Carmarthenshire level; however, it shows that people from all minority ethnic groups, with the exception of Chinese and Mixed, are at a **greater risk of death from COVID-19**. In particular, black people are nearly twice as likely to experience a COVID-19 related death, taking into account different social and geographical factors. They are followed by the Bangladeshi/Pakistani community who are more than one and a half times more likely to die from coronavirus. Gypsies and Travellers are also an ethnicity and also have a relatively high risk of coronavirus in terms of underlying health issues and cultural factors.

### Impact of Covid-19



From the onset of the pandemic, the authority established a Gold and Silver command structure to oversee and prioritise strategic decisions. Clear direction was given in terms of the impact of service closure on our protected groups and our employees. Also, as part of the re-starting of services that stopped when we went into lockdown, Gold Command established a robust four stage process, with clear guidance that no service would be asked to re-start until the four stages had been completed.

Our Leader and Chief Executive gave a clear vision that re-starting services needed to be done in a safe and planned way. We needed to make sure that our services were safe for the public to use and safe for our staff whilst working.

A Service Recovery Planning page was published on the intranet, including key information and a step-by-step guide for managers who are asked to plan the recovery of their service. As part of this template, managers were required to complete information on supporting the workforce, disability, and Equalities.

<b>Disability</b>	
When recovering your service, you must take steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles a disabled worker might face. You must ensure that a disabled worker has the same access to everything that is involved in doing and keeping a job as a non-disabled person.	
	<i>Applicable (click box)</i>
Have you considered any obstacles which have arisen during closure of service? E.g. revision of office location or layout	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you reviewed any reasonable workplace adjustments that are already in place and discussed with employees and workers whether these need to be updated as part of any new working arrangements? (Ideally this would form part of ongoing updates you have been having with your staff).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered how you can, as far as possible, remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage faced by your disabled workers, which would not be faced by a non-disabled worker? E.g. specialised equipment and technology-based support.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Equalities</b>	
Within the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have an additional responsibility to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, as outlined below. When making decisions and delivering services, we must have due regard to:	
	<i>Applicable (click box)</i>
Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
When recovering your service, please ensure that you consider the following in context of the Protected Groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation):	
The impact of your decisions on the Protected Groups e.g. look at the profile of service users and who could be affected by changes	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Ensuring the recovery of services does not unlawfully discriminate e.g. accessibility of the service and information	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Strategic Equality Objective - The needs and rights of people with Protected Characteristics shape the design of services

#### **Case study 4: Equality and Diversity Task & Finish Group (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic)**

The death of George Floyd in May 2020 drew the world's attention to racial inequality; subsequent marches, protests, and campaigning marked a global response and brought racism to the forefront of many agendas. In light of these events the council considered two Notices of Motions during 2020 and as a result a Task and Finish Group was established to review the referred matters.

Notices of Motion received by Council

**The first Notice of Motion was received by Council at its meeting held on 12 February 2020. Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive Board:**

**(Minute 7.1 refers)**

*That Carmarthenshire County Council –*

- *Believe that more needs to be done to improve diversity within our workforce*
- *Commits to working with community groups to understand the barriers that exist for individuals BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic)*
- *Calls on the Executive Board to create an Advisory Panel to consider what actions can be taken to increase diversity in the workplace*

**The second Notice of Motion was received by Council at its meeting on 8 July 2020 Council referred the following notice of motion to the Executive Board: -**

**(Minute 7.1 refers)**

*The harrowing death of George Floyd in the USA and the weeks of protest and debate that have followed has given us all an opportunity to reflect on the harsh reality of racism across the world. We pride ourselves on being a caring, open, and inclusive County, but it has to be openly acknowledged that sadly elements of racism and intolerance remain within our society today. It is therefore incumbent on this Council to formally recognise these failings, reach out to the BAME community, formulate proactive educational programmes, and undertake a re-evaluation of our historical monuments in the light of recent events.*

*Therefore, this Council*

- *Makes a clear and unequivocal statement that it abhors racism, prejudice, and discrimination in all its forms – past and present.*
- *Supports the message of 'Black Lives Matter' and believes in the right of citizens to protest peacefully in a safe environment.*



- *Recognises the importance of BAME communities in our county and commits to working with them. We aim to educate, identify, and eradicate racism in Carmarthenshire.*

*The council will:*

- *Listen to the voice of BAME communities in our county and will set up a Cross Party Task and Finish group to take evidence to ensure that their concerns, fears, and proposals are fully heard and informs future policy, with the group completing the work within six months.*
- *Work with the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner to deal with racism, prejudice, and discrimination within the judicial system.*
- *Continue to learn from historical events in a factually balanced approach*
- *Commit to working with our schools to include the themes of colonialism, exploitation, discrimination, and racism in the new National Curriculum and in lifelong learning*
- *Welcome the First Minister's announcement to undertake a national review of public monuments, including the one to Thomas Picton in Carmarthen, as well as street names and report upon their appropriateness in 21st century Wales.*
- *Embrace Black History Month (October) by holding public events to highlight the reality of the negative impact of racial inequality and celebrate the contribution made by BAME communities to our local and national life*

The Executive Board gave due regard to both Notices of Motion and as a result decided that they should be addressed in conjunction with each other and proposed that a Cross Party Task & Finish Group should be established.

#### Equality and Diversity Task & Finish Group (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic)

The first meeting was held on 3 August 2020, whereby terms of reference were agreed, and a work plan for the following six months was initiated. One of the first areas of discussion for the Group was a review of public monuments and street names and the Wales-based review being undertaken via Welsh Government. Members of the Group were aware of public comment and discussion about monuments and memorials across Wales and in Carmarthenshire, noting that the Picton Monument in Carmarthen Town had drawn particular attention. The Group considered all aspects of their work and agreed that the matter of the interpretation and history of Sir Thomas Picton and the monument in Carmarthen Town should be dealt with at the outset. This decision was made considering the great public and media interest. The Group also agreed at an early stage that to move forward and focus on the more significant areas of review, including equality and diversity in the workplace, education and the broader issues effecting BAME communities in Carmarthenshire, this matter should be dealt with first.



## Strategic Equality Objective - Safe and Cohesive communities that are resilient, fair, and equal

### Case study 4: Diversity Calendar

The aim of the Equality & Diversity Promotion Calendar is to provide a standardised and authorised timetable of key Equality and Diversity celebratory / designated days. The calendar aims to provide a platform for both internal and external communication, across all protected characteristics, as noted in the Equality Act 2010.

Teams from the council have worked on the Equality and Diversity Calendar to promote awareness, celebrate diversity, and commemorate certain historical events. During 2020/21 the Community Cohesion team promoted and supported a number of campaigns including Hate Crime Awareness Week, Black History Month sharing social media on an ITV documentary exploring what it is to be Welsh and Black. Also, Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, International Womens Day, Refugee Week and Gypsy Traveller History Month.

A few examples are noted below -

### White Ribbon campaign

#### How you can support this year's White Ribbon campaign

186 days ago



There's just a couple of days to go until this year's White Ribbon Day on November 25 which aims to raise awareness and work towards ending male violence against women.

As part of the campaign the day is followed by 16 Days of Action.

Last year in Carmarthenshire over 2,800 victims reported to the police, with a significant increase in referrals to specialist services reported in the last couple of months.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, a number of events to mark White Ribbon Day will not be able to take place such as the White Ribbon Walk in Carmarthen. During the pandemic it's more important than ever that residents continue to show their support. This can be done in a number of ways, including by making the [promise online](#) to 'never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women.'

While domestic abuse affects both sexes, the largest number of violent incidents involve men against women. But ultimately male violence against women is everyone's issue, not just women's.

Men can sign up to become a White Ribbon [Ambassador](#) and women a [Champion](#) and help promote awareness of the campaign and engage with men and boys to step up and call out violent behaviour among their 'peers.'

Once again this year Carmarthenshire County Council will be showing its support by flying the White Ribbon flags at its council buildings in Carmarthen (County Hall), and town halls in Llanelli and Ammanford on November 25.

Cllr Cefin Campbell, Carmarthenshire County Council's Executive Board Member for Community Safety and a White Ribbon Ambassador, said: "As a council we have supported the White Ribbon campaign for a number of years and I'm proud to say we're doing so again. This year due to Covid-19 it's more important than ever that we not only support but we raise awareness of the support that's out there locally and nationally to those who need it. If you or someone you know is affected by domestic abuse please don't suffer in silence there is help out there. We can all play our part, from signing the pledge to becoming an ambassador or champion."

Support and advice for anyone affected by domestic abuse is available by calling Live Fear Free on 0808 80 10 800. For local advice or how you can donate to their services you can contact Llanelli (Llanelli) on 01554 752 422; Calan DVS (Ammanford) on 01269 597 474 and Carmarthen Domestic Abuse Service (CarmDAS) on 01267 238 410.

### Trans day of Visibility

Trans day of Visibility gave us an opportunity to reinforce key workplace messages and underline our commitment to equality of opportunity and promoting diversity. We value all staff regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. As a key employer, we aim to create an environment in which all staff, whatever their sexuality or sexual identity are equally welcomed and valued, and in which homophobic, bi-phobic, trans phobic and other discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

Over the last 12 months we have developed guidance to support employees who are LGBT and managers who have LGBT staff in their teams. The aim is to support managers with their responsibility for developing an inclusive culture in their workplace and providing the appropriate support to their LGBT team members. Also, to ensure that all staff feel supported to be themselves in the workplace and understanding their own responsibilities for maintaining appropriate behaviour and upholding the Authority's core values. This guidance supplements the Authority's Equality & Diversity policy and Behavioural Standards guidance.

#### TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY

🕒 56 days ago

Wednesday, March 31 2021 marks Trans Day of Visibility (TDoV), which takes place every year to celebrate trans and non-binary people.

We want to make sure that trans people, and individuals undergoing the transition process, are treated fairly and have the support they need whilst working for us.

So, we have developed [Transgender Guidance](#) for our staff and managers to help them understand the experience and process of transitioning, as well as the potential barriers that may inhibit a trans person in reaching their potential in the workplace.

It also provides helpful guidance on supporting trans applicants and employees, creating an inclusive working environment and what a trans person can expect in terms of support.

Staff and managers are being encouraged to learn more by accessing our e-learning modules.

The 'Trans and non-binary awareness' e-learning module for staff and the 'Supporting trans and non-binary people at work: a guide for managers' can be found at [Course: Traws ac Anneuaidd \(wales.nhs.uk\)](#)

Guidance on how to login can be found on the [Learning and Development pages](#) on the intranet

Find out more by visiting our [Supporting Transgender Staff](#) pages on the intranet.

Strategic Equality Objective - Safe and Cohesive communities that are resilient, fair, and equal

### Case study 5: Zero Tolerance to Racism



The council has pledged to take a zero-tolerance approach to racism within the authority.

Council members agreed the motion, which includes a pledge to ‘take a stand against racism and promote a more inclusive and equal workplace and society that gives every individual in Wales the right to feel safe, valued and included.’

The council joins other organisations and individuals who have signed the policy Zero Racism Wales campaign which has been launched by Race Council Cymru.

Alongside the organisation’s pledge, which was signed by Chief Executive Wendy Walters; Leader of the Council, Cllr Emlyn Dole and Cllr Cefin Campbell, Executive Board Member responsible for Communities and Rural Affairs and Chair of the Equality and Diversity Task & Finish Group (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) have also made individual pledges, and we would encourage you all to make the pledge.

By signing the pledge, the council commits to promoting a zero tolerance to racism throughout the organisation, this means that:

- We will take a stand against racism and promote a more inclusive and equal society for all.
- We will not tolerate racial prejudice, discrimination, harassment, victimisation, abuse, or violence against any individual.
- We will stand in solidarity, come together, and say no to racism, in all its forms.
- We will promote good race relations between people from diverse ethnic backgrounds in organisation.
- We will promote equal and fair opportunities for people from diverse ethnic backgrounds to attain promotion.
- We will eliminate unlawful race discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and abuse.

Staff were also encouraged to show their support by signing the pledge, by going to the Zero Racism Wales website where you can also see the names of all those organisations and individuals who have signed.

Strategic Equality Objective - Safe and Cohesive communities that are resilient, fair, and equal

### **Case study 7: Community Cohesion**

The Mid and South West Wales Community Cohesion team are one of 8 regional teams, funded by the Welsh Government. The team covers Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys and consists of a Coordinator and 2 Officers.

Community Cohesion has a wide brief including Hate Crime, Cohesion Campaigns, Work with minority groups such as Refugees and the Gypsy Traveller Community, Community Tensions and work looking at the impact that Brexit may be having upon our communities. In relation to this area of work, the team are tasked with ensuring that as many EU Citizens in the County have applied to the EU Settlement Scheme.

#### **Hate Crime**

During Hate Crime Awareness Week which took place between 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of October this year the Cohesion Team took part in a Regional working group to ensure initiatives were coordinated and mapped onto a local calendar. Partners included OPCC, Dyfed Powys Police, Victim Support, Race Council Cymru and the Cohesion Team. The Cohesion Team took the lead on several regional initiatives:

- An Art Competition for Primary School Children. Schools across the region were invited to design a flag celebrating diversity. The details were shared on Yr Hwb as part of an online learning resource put together by Victim Support.
- A short Hate Crime Awareness Film. The film was shared widely on social media. Members of the public were invited to watch the film, then take part in a short Hate Crime Quiz – for a chance to win an iPad and shopping vouchers. The project was developed by the Mid and West Wales team and rolled out across Wales by all Cohesion teams. 516 people responded to the quiz.

The team promoted the Welsh Government's Hate Hurts Wales, campaign to help raise awareness and understanding of hate crime and encourage people to report it. The campaign has been developed with input from stakeholders and real experiences of prosecuted hate crime to show the harmful impact that hate crime has on individuals and our wider society. The campaign includes advertising on TV as well as digital and social media channels. See [gov.wales/hate-hurts-wales](https://gov.wales/hate-hurts-wales) for further information.

The Community cohesion team were asked by Welsh Government to work with the 4 local authorities we support to consider signing up to Race Council Cymru's Zero Tolerance to Racism Campaign. Carmarthenshire County council have signed up and the launch event took place on Sunday 21 March 2021 to celebrate UN [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#).

Hate Crime Schools Training - WLGA are rolling out Welsh Government funded training within Schools. The training will be delivered across Wales to schools to develop critical thinking skills in relation to Hate Crime. Having been paused since Covid, the training will

now take place between June 2021 – March 2022. 6 schools have been identified in Carmarthenshire to be in receipt of this training with potential for a further 2 to join due to additional resources received by WLGA.

### **Monitor and respond to community tensions relating to the Brexit process**

The Cohesion team established weekly multi agency Tension Monitoring meetings in March 2020. This is useful for understanding issues and hotspots of tensions within our communities, and where appropriate develop mitigation. Partners include Dyfed Powys Police, Mid and West Wales Fire Service, Victim Support, Race Council Cymru, Travelling Ahead, University of Wales Trinity St David's, various departments within the Local Authority attend including the Community Safety manager, housing among others.

The Cohesion team commissioned research which was undertaken on the impact of Brexit (and first covid lockdown) to identify issues affecting communities. The purpose of this was to provide an evidence base, identifying potential community hotspots, tensions and issues particularly arising from the Brexit referendum in 2016 and its subsequent impact on community cohesion in the following years. The methodology involved a literature and data review, an online survey with key organisations and agencies, in-depth telephone interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups with communities of interest such as BAME, Refugees, LGBTQ+, people with Disabilities, GT community, EU Citizens, First language Welsh speakers and some mixed groups. Recommendations are being incorporated into the Community Cohesion Action plan for 2021/22.

### **EU Settlement Scheme**

The Community Cohesion team have been working to promote the EU Settlement Scheme across the region. Specifically, we have:

- Run a nine-month radio campaigns across 4 radio stations
- Have regular meetings with the third sector partners involved in promoting and supporting the EUSS. From this, online training has been developed to support front line staff in signposting and promoting the Scheme. Training ran from November 2020 – March 2021.
- Regular social media messages
- direct email contact with local employers (care homes, retail, tourism, agriculture etc)
- setting up follow up correspondence with Schools (parents) through tools such as Parent Mail.
- Work with Hywel Dda Health Board, Dyfed Powys Police including the Rural Crime Team delivering EUSS briefing via skype, resulting in key messaging being sent via their FB and Twitter networks to specific farming-based Communities who employ EU workers.

## **Small Grant funding for Cohesion Projects**

The team made available a second round of grant funding to develop projects which support cohesion principles. Work included supporting Community Groups to open (adhering to current guidance); the development of online events, resource materials or other initiatives which improve relations within our communities.

We encouraged applications which carried out activities to bring together communities who may otherwise never get to meet online or (if appropriate) in person – for example new arrivals in neighbourhoods getting to know people who have lived in the area for a long time, twinning projects with other communities in different parts of Wales where areas have a different diversity profile, or intergenerational work.

### **Example project - Loud and Proud Project**

This project, run by CETMA/Carmarthenshire LGBTQ+ Project was the Mid & West Wales LOUD & PROUD Day. This online event on 27th February 2021, featured a series of workshops/contributions from LGBTQ+ and affiliated organisations/groups/services from across the region for the benefit of members of the community and to mark LGBTQ+ History Month 2021.

Workshops and contributions included: Hate Crime Awareness, Hate Crime Conversation, Inclusive Education, Reaching Out, Psychological First Aid and Stress Management, COVID-19 Awareness, LGBTQ+ Historical Collections, Interview with Adoptive Parents, Art as Therapy, Places & Faces Project, Gentle Yoga, Drag Artist Entertainment.

Contributors included: Victim Support, Mid & West Wales Community Cohesion Team, Dyfed-Powys Police, LGBT+ Cymru Helpline, Trans Pride, Rivki Rose Training, Nia Griffith MP, Fay Jones MP, St Fagans National History Museum, Carmarthenshire LGBTQ+ Project, Adoption Mid & West Wales, Carmarthenshire Adult Community Learning, Diana D Drag Artist, Lola Lemont Drag Artist, RED Total Wellness and Pride Cymru.

The project raised awareness of Hate Crime and highlighted how members of the public can help tackle incidents by reporting to Victim Support and Dyfed-Powys Police. The event featured an informative video from Dyfed-Powys Police and a Hate Crime Conversation video between the Carmarthenshire LGBTQ+ Project and Victim Support. Highlighting the Hate Crime Charter featured heavily, and organisations were encouraged to adopt it.

The project overcame community tensions by creating a welcoming and inclusive space. Education is a powerful tool for combating social tensions, with workshops educating on the importance of using correct pronouns and Transgender & Non-Binary identities being particularly powerful in this regard. These workshops along with the advocacy of inclusive education from Members of Parliament Nia Griffith and Fay Jones, help spread the message that diversity in our societies and communities is a positive thing and should be celebrated together and not a force to push people apart.

Also, the event celebrated LGBTQ+ history. Learning of the struggles many LGBTQ+ people have faced to ensure we have the rights we enjoy today, can be incredibly humbling but also enlightening as to the discrimination and social injustices which have existed, and in some cases still exist. Learning about the past efforts of many in the community can bring people together in a desire to secure greater social equality. The project benefitted from support from St Fagans National Museum of History and Pride Cymru for their contributions of the LGBTQ+ Collections and Icons & Allies lectures, respectively.

The event also tackled the negative mental health of many as a result of the ensuing social restrictions, with a strong emphasis on including workshops from a registered mental health and counselling charity (LGBT+ Cymru Helpline), Art as Therapy workshop from a qualified 'Art as Therapy Practitioner' and a gentle exercise class from RED Total Wellness. These were all workshops which viewers could interact with both in real time and by watching back over the event after it had finished.

At the time of hosting, the event was noted as reaching 2,421 people/profiles on Facebook and 2,703 people/profiles on Twitter. This resulted in a combined reach of 5,124 people/profiles across both social network platforms.

As the event was pre-recorded, it is still available to watch on the Carmarthenshire LGBTQ+ Project Facebook page. The current reach stands at 2,896 people/profiles on Facebook and 3,438 people/profiles on Twitter

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Examples of feedback include:

*"What an innovative event! No prides again this year, this is great."*

*"Excellent content so glad there are so many groups and organisations that support our community."*

*"I love the range today."*

*"Great event thanks for organising"*

*"What a diverse event - loved it!"*

### **Example project - Faces and Places**

The 'Faces & Places' project celebrated diversity across Mid & West Wales and brought together people's stories from all walks of life, including age, geographical spread, cultural background, colour, refugees, religion, disability, transgender, sexual orientation and language. By highlighting the stories from groups that often experience Hate Crime the project will help to demystify myths that cause misconceptions and prejudice.

The project overcame community tensions by bringing diverse groups together either virtually and/or face to face that don't usually meet; highlighting what communities have in

common rather than what sets them apart and demystifying myths around minority groups, in turn promoting cohesion and understanding, and reducing hate crime occurrence

### **Community Cohesion Films**

Community Cohesion developing two short films to raise awareness of key cohesion issues. A Hate Crime Awareness Film was released during Hate Crime Awareness week 2020. The team also developed a film showcasing the positive stories of Syrian Refugees who have settled in Mid and South West Wales.



## Strategic Equality Objective – Improving access to our services and access to our environment

### **Case Study 8: Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition and Partnership**

The overall aim of the Carmarthenshire Disability Partnership (CDP) is to make sure services delivered by the Council meet the needs of disabled people throughout Carmarthenshire. The Council continues to support the work of the Coalition and benefits from its feedback and advice. One key example which we reported on in 2019-20 was the Partnership's involvement with the Pentre Awel development. This involvement has continued in 2020-21.

During the design development of Pentre Awel, the Project Team engaged with the Disability Coalition to obtain specialist feedback on a wide range of design matters, including accessibility, hydrotherapy, public transport, and car parking. Further to the case study featured in last year's report, some of the points raised by the Coalition have been reflected in the Stage 3 designs issued in May 2020, including greater provision of disabled car parking. As the project embarks on the next stage of detailed design (Stage 4) in Q3 2021, accessibility will be given due consideration. It is anticipated that there will be opportunities for further engagement and dialogue.

The Partnership have also advised us as a council when we proposed changes in terms of the public realm in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Measures were put in place to ensure the safety of our pedestrians as they accessed our high streets and essential services during the pandemic.

Since the measures were implemented the covid situation has changed with movement and business restrictions being implemented and eased in accordance with changing circumstances. During this period continuous monitoring has been undertaken to ensure the measures remain appropriate with an on-line consultation exercise undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021 with businesses and members of the public and regular town centres surveys of footfall and air quality. Disability Partnership members have also been liaising with local businesses and individuals to ask for their feedback in terms of accessibility and any issues that may have arisen for the disabled community. Following a further period of consultation, the Equality Impact Assessment was updated, with additional comments in terms of accessibility.

During 2020-21, the partnership has also looked at the reallocation of disabled parking bays in Llanelli, the accessibility statement, and attractions available at Pembrey Country Park and volunteering opportunities.

Our aim for 2021-22 is to widen the membership of the partnership to ensure pan-disability representation and to ensure that other public sector organisations can engage with members.

## Contact details

For further information on Carmarthenshire County Council's Strategic Equality Plan, please contact:

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