

Strategic Equality Plan

Annual Report

2021-22

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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Foreword to the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2021-22

We are pleased to present Carmarthenshire County Council's Annual Report for 2021-22 detailing the implementation of our Strategic Equality Plan and our Strategic Equality Objectives.

The main purpose of this Annual Report is to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities covered under the specific duties in Wales should produce an annual report - this report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

As part of our report, we will demonstrate our progress against our Strategic Equality Objectives, 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.

Our aim is to make Carmarthenshire a more equal place for people to live, work and access services, however we recognise that there are, and will continue to be, areas for improvement. Publishing this Annual Report will not only help the Council to meet its obligations under the Wales Specific Equality Duties, but will assist you, as our residents to identify these areas and monitor progress on them.

Councillor Philip Hughes

Cabinet Member for Equalities (Policy and Workforce)

Councillor Ann Davies

Cabinet Member for Equalities (Communities)

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.

Protected Characteristics

This is the term used in the Equality Act to identify the types of people who are more likely to experience detrimental treatment and/or discrimination simply because of who they are. The law is designed to protect them, they are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation.

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

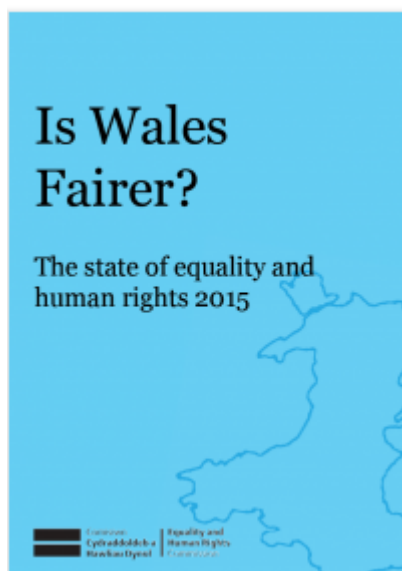
Statistical background

Carmarthenshire has an estimated population of 190,073 and a population density (population count/area in sq. km) of 78 people per square km. The County is very diverse and rural. Following a review by the Electoral Boundary Commission in 2019, the county now consists of 51 Electoral Wards with 75 Elected Members. Demographic Profiles will be produced for each of the Electoral Wards and for the County following the release of the 2021 Census data. This will provide a picture of life in the individual communities as well as valuable local information.

- 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. During 2021/22, we have established a Data Insight team to lead on, and support departments in the collation and analysis of data. The Census 2021 results are due to be released during 2022/23 and we will build upon the

evidence we hold on our communities across Carmarthenshire. This insight will also reflect on the [Is Wales Fairer?](#) Report, published by the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

Local Well-being Assessment

During the year, we have also been supporting the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board to prepare the Local Well-being Assessment

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires each of the 22 Public Services Boards to develop and publish a Well-being Assessment. The Assessment will serve as a statement of well-being for each respective county area. In addition to the importance of reflecting quantitative data (e.g., from the Census and other official sources), the guidance stresses that significant engagement with people is critical in adequately making the assessment of well-being.

In the interests of collaboration and making best use of resources, the Public Services Boards of Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire worked together on their well-being assessments. This consistent, regional approach also assists organisations, who are part of the Public Services Board, but whose remit extends beyond Carmarthenshire.

A survey was developed, and a series of questions were formulated under the 7 National Goals of prosperous, resilient, equal, healthier, cohesive, vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and a responsive Carmarthenshire.

The survey was available in Welsh, English, Polish, Romanian, and Arabic. An Easy Read version of the survey was also available in Welsh and English.

Detailed demographic questions were also included as part of the survey (respondents could not be identified) to ensure that we heard the voices of all of our communities in our engagement work. This information also enabled us to analyse feedback from specific communities and protected groups on their social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being and that the feedback forms parts of our evidence in the development of Well-being Objectives and the Well-being Plan during 2022-23.

The Local Well-being Assessment and supporting documents can be viewed on [The Carmarthenshire We Want](#) website.



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. The collection of data during recruitment will be enhanced by the introduction of a new recruitment system which will provide us with easier and more detailed reporting tools.

In addition, data is collected and reported on via the Pay Policy and Equal Pay Audits which are published every year.

Equality impact assessments are undertaken on employment policies and regular monitoring of pay and grading/job evaluations is also in place.

Workforce Planning sessions for service managers have been rolled out and workforce plans consider the workforce profile with a view to actions being put in place to ensure the workforce reflects the community it serves.

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.

A case study on our recent work to introduce an Integrated Impact Assessment process can be seen on page 18.

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 Selection Questionnaire used in procurement tender exercises.

Information in relation to Equalities is included in the questionnaire and all potential suppliers must complete the section. The questionnaire 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.

Welsh Government Code of Practice – Ethical Employment in Supply Chains

The Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Policy was approved by Cabinet on the 8th of November 2022.

We have uploaded the Council's Modern Slavery Statement under the Council and Democracy pages.

Below is the link where the Statement can be found and downloaded.

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/equality-diversity/>

The Cabinet have also nominated an Ethical Employment Elected Champion.

Strategic Equality Objective - Being a Leading Employer

Case Study 1: Mental Health First Aid within the authority

Mental Health has been on the rise in recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic having a huge impact on the mental well-being of staff and the population, this has been demonstrated through Occupational Health and wider statistics. The effects of the pandemic on mental health are likely to be long-lasting and increased mental health services and support will be required long-term.

The Health & Wellbeing Coordinator researched courses and support available surrounding growing concerns for members of the authority prior to the pandemic. The first course previewed to the authority was a 'Mental Health Awareness' course. Following the demand and success of this course and the growing popularity of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), we researched courses available. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a training course which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.

The scoping work for MHFA began in 2020 providing a Level 1 course to the whole authority, run between January and March 2020. Over a course of three months, we had 194 attendees: with the MHFA training course piloted and proving successful we aimed to offer training to staff and roll out an accredited course throughout the authority. Whilst scoping for the training we considered cost, the timing, and the commitment to the role; gaining quotes from various companies to compare. This training was unfortunately put on hold due to COVID-19 and the lockdown as it was deemed that this full two-day course would be too in-depth to deliver remotely.

However, following further investigations many companies began delivering the courses online. We decided the course provider based on the cost to the authority and the ability to complete the course remotely. During this time, the Health and Well-being Coordinator (Mental Health) post was extended to ensure we were able to continue providing robust and resilient support. The roll out to the authority finally began in June 2021 with an agreement to hold one course every quarter with up to 14 delegates on each course, the course layout is over 12 hours with 6 hours self-directed e-learning and two 3-hour live webinar sessions. On completion of the course, each delegate is a qualified MHFA and holds this qualification over 3 years. The promotion of this course was targeted through our intranet pages, emails, and communications in newsletters to all staff, alongside Learning & Development department.

Once qualified, all MHFA are added to our intranet pages with contact details, as well as if they are Welsh speaking or learning, giving the caller an option to speak in their preferred language. To support the MHFA a Teams channel has been created with weekly conversations, tips and advice; a monthly networking session is planned for every third Wednesday of the month with any updates or training that may be useful.

To understand the volume of calls the MHFA are receiving for advice, a screening form has been developed, outlining the callers concerns and how the MHFA supported, whilst always maintaining confidentiality. The purpose of the screening form is not only to support the

MHFA further with advice in specific fields but also to create a reactive service, having support in place for specific departments or utilising e-chats to combat these concerns.

Statistics

- 194 attendees at Level 1 Mental Health First Aid between January and March 2020
- 33 qualified MHFA by the end of 2021, over 4 courses in the year
- A focus of having another 56 qualified MHFA by the end of 2022
- The largest concerns arising from the MHFA screening forms are low mood and anxiety.

Feedback

Feedback was obtained from the MHFA via a feedback form a year after the first pilot to gauge the training and how it has been utilised so far. It is also an opportunity 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:



"I think it was interesting to see the scope of the training and how much it covers regarding Mental Health. It is beneficial just to get that knowledge as an individual as well."

"It is helpful in terms of guiding you on how to support someone who may be having difficulty with their mental health. It gives a wide range of information on mental health and ways of seeking support. It can save lives"

Moving forward

- Continue providing advice and support to the current MHFA
- Continue promoting for further training and recruiting for future MHFA
- Further promotion within the authority to ensure everyone is aware of the MHFA and how to get in touch.

Strategic Equality Objective - Being a Leading Employer

Case Study 2: Learning & Development

During the year, the Learning & Development team have led and supported several initiatives to support our services and staff:

- We have alternated the times of delivery for development sessions to enable staff with care and childcare responsibilities opportunities to attend development sessions.
- We have provided a number of courses to Social Care staff and foster carers in matters such as Transgender Awareness, Autism and various mental health topics.
- Our bitesize mental health courses for the third sector and independent sector proved particularly popular, encouraging a range of accessibility for people with mental health issues.
- We now monitor applications for all of our learning and development opportunities, to ensure that there is no disproportionate impact on any protected characteristic.
- In the development of our online learning, training has been provided to the learning & development content creators, to ensure representation of different protected characteristics in our learning content.
- Accessibility for digital learning is a priority, therefore the learning and development team have been developing our awareness to support the production of digital learning and promote accessibility.
- Learning & development have also been working through our existing e-learning provision to ensure that all learning is accessible.



In our work to support disabilities




- One of our new starters in home care is dyslexic with mild learning disabilities. To support this new starter, one of our Learning & Development Advisers worked with this employee on a face-to-face basis to support completion of the digital induction.
- One of our student Social Workers has degenerative visual impairment. In order to support this person on the placement and the associated training, we provided hardware (a 44-inch screen and large laptop). This person is also dyslexic, therefore we provided software to enable them to be supported at home as well as in the workplace. Reasonable adjustments were also put in place for reading time, doubling the normal reading time permitted. This support has enabled the student Social Worker to maintain the placement to return for next year.
- One of our employees has a visual impairment, and we have been working with the University provider for the course that we are supporting, to ensure all materials for learning are available in an accessible format. We have also been working with this employee, who is assisting the learning and development function to develop and test training content to ensure accessibility.
- One of our Welsh language learners is dyslexic, therefore we worked with the employee on a 1:1 basis to understand their needs, following which, in agreement with the employee, we transferred the employee onto a course which delivered sessions in an alternative delivery method, which enabled them to continue their Welsh language journey.
- At our Graduate Assessment Centre, we worked with one of the candidates on a one-to-one basis to understand their needs and agree a reasonable adjustment, which supported the candidate to pass through the first stage of the recruitment process.

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

- We have supported three Welsh speaking employees through the Practice Educator course, which enables us to accommodate more Welsh speaking Social Work students.
- We have supported two Welsh speaking employees to develop as Coaches, to expand the availability of Coaching delivered in the medium of Welsh.
- We have developed digital mentors training in English and Welsh, so that digital mentors are able to provide support to staff in their language of choice.
- An increasing number of our courses are now delivered in the medium of Welsh, and further work is underway for 2022/23 to continue to expand the provision of Welsh medium development sessions.
- We have delivered several Clwb Clebran sessions in partnership with our colleagues in the Policy team, to support employees who may have reduced opportunity to hear Welsh in the workplace whilst working remotely. This includes Welsh celebrities and people within the Authority, discussing various topics, including gardening, fitness and healthy eating, mindfulness, and cooking. We have been delighted at the

response, with double the numbers expected in attendance, and we will be continuing Clwb Clebran into 2022/23.

- We are committed to supporting learners on their Welsh language journey; therefore, each learner is provided with a mentor to support and extend their learning. Additionally, the Authority provides paid time for all learners on Welsh language development activities.

<p>Pathways and Agreements</p> <p>Please take a look here if you are unsure which level you are at.... We have different pathways available to reach your desired level and further information about the Welsh language agreement if you do not meet the desired Welsh skill level on appointment.</p> <p>Welsh Language Skills Levels</p> <p>Various Pathways - Reaching your levels</p> <p>language-mentors/</p>	 <p>Using Welsh at Work</p> <p>There is an opportunity for us as an organisation to be part of a new scheme by Work Welsh.</p> <p>USING WELSH AT WORK</p>	 <p>Gloywi Welsh</p> <p>Do you speak Welsh fluently and want to improve your language? Join us and come to the one day Gloywi course, delivered on Zoom</p> <p>GLOYWI WELSH</p>	 <p>Become a Mentor to help staff practice their Welsh</p> <p>And ... Yes your Welsh is good enough! Many of our staff are learning Welsh or would like to practice what they have previously learnt. So, we need people like you to speak to them.</p> <p>WELSH LANGUAGE MENTORS</p>
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Strategic Equality Objective – Being a Leading Employer

Case study 3: – Transgender guidance for staff and managers

As a Council, we are responsible for delivering a diverse range of services to the community that we serve. Our success depends on the people we employ and being able to draw on their different perspectives and experiences. By attracting, recruiting and developing people from the widest possible pool of talent we can develop a better understanding of our customers' needs now, and in the future to ensure our success.

As part of our Stonewall Diversity Champions membership in 2021/22, we have formally submitted an application to the Workplace Equality Index. We have discussed our submission in detail with our Account Manager in Stonewall Cymru and during 2022/23 we will work on the priorities identified to further enhance our work on LGBTQ+ inclusion. Our areas of improvement include staff and community engagement and improving awareness of LGBTQ+ inclusion across the council.

During the year, the People Management Division have continued to promote our Transgender guidance document for staff and managers, which was published in September 2020. It has been produced to support our employees and managers in understanding the experience of Trans and LGB+ staff in the workplace and the potential barriers that may inhibit a person in reaching their potential. It provides helpful guidance on supporting LGB+ and trans applicants and employees, creating an inclusive working environment and what a LGBTQ+ person can expect in terms of support.

If barriers exist to the recruitment and retention of LGBTQ+ staff, we could miss out on this potential. This guidance builds upon the information in our Equality & Diversity Policy and our Core Values as a Council.

In addition to the guidance, an e-learning module is now available for managers and staff to support an inclusive workplace.

SUPPORTING TRANS AND NON-BINARY PEOPLE AT WORK: A GUIDE FOR MANAGERS

Supporting trans and non-binary people at work: a guide for managers

Who is it aimed at?

All Staff

What are the objectives?

Knowing how to support your trans and non-binary people and create a respectful and safe environment for them is key to promoting their own personal well-being and ensuring that your organisation manages to harness and nurture the very best talent. Comprising original drama, personal testimony and an in-depth case study featuring leading UK insurance company LV=, this course provides an essential toolkit for managers in managing and supporting trans and non-binary staff at all levels of an organisation.

How will it make a difference?

This is an externally provided course and is only available in English. It is only accessible to staff who work within Carmarthenshire County Council.

Delivery method:

eLearning

We are all different. Our different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives mean that we think about issues in different ways and can identify new solutions and opportunities to improve. These skills are important for us all so that we can deliver the best possible service to the public.

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

Case study 4: Theatres and Cultural Services

During 2021/22, our Cultural Services Division have been developing relationships and programmes to ensure that our Theatres offer an inclusive experience to our residents. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Theatres Team have been working closely with a company called Taking Flight.

Taking Flight are one of the leading companies in Wales who work with Deaf, disabled, and non-disabled performers, and have been working with us to increase the number of accessible performances for audiences.

[FOW](#) was co-produced by the Theatres Team as part of our live streamed programme during lockdown in April 2021, and was delivered in 3 different languages, including BSL, Cymraeg and English. The show went on to be presented at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2021.

FOW

Deaf & Fabulous Productions & Taking Flight Theatre Company in coproduction with The Welfare & Theatrau Sir Gâr



Thursday 29th April – Wednesday 5th May 2021.

[The Curious case of Aberlliw](#) was co-produced by the Theatres Team as part of our outdoor programme when outdoor venues started to reopen in June 2021, this took place at Llyn Llech Owain and families followed a trail around the park on an outdoor adventure, receiving video updates and with tasks to complete via an app downloaded on to their mobile device (with BSL/captioned videos in the app).

[Ghost Light](#) was our first event at the Ffwrnes when we reopened in July 2021, which was an immersive tour of the backstage areas with a sound and light show. Taking Flight were our access consultants on this and offered BSL and captioned, and audio described performances.



The Team is currently a partner in a new project called 'Breaking the Box' along with Taking Flight, Disability Arts Cymru, RCT Theatres, Pontio and Hynt. The project is funded by Arts Council Wales and together we are exploring how to improve physical access at our venues, developing an inclusive programme, developing an inclusive staff and volunteer team, developing inclusive audiences and accessible marketing and communication. The project offers three early-career creatives work placement, training and skills development within the venues, and training for the venue's staff.

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

Case study 5: Accessibility of digital services

In light of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, our Marketing and Media Team and IT and Policy Division have been working closely to improve the accessibility of our corporate website.

As part of our corporate website, we have an Accessibility statement which outlines our aim as a council and the steps we have taken to improve. We also recognise areas of development and ask our residents for their feedback in terms of accessibility.

This website has been developed with a clear vision that we want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, it means that our residents should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver).

We have also made the website text as simple as possible to understand and we refer our residents to [AbilityNet](#) for advice on making their device easier to use.

Council services / Accessibility

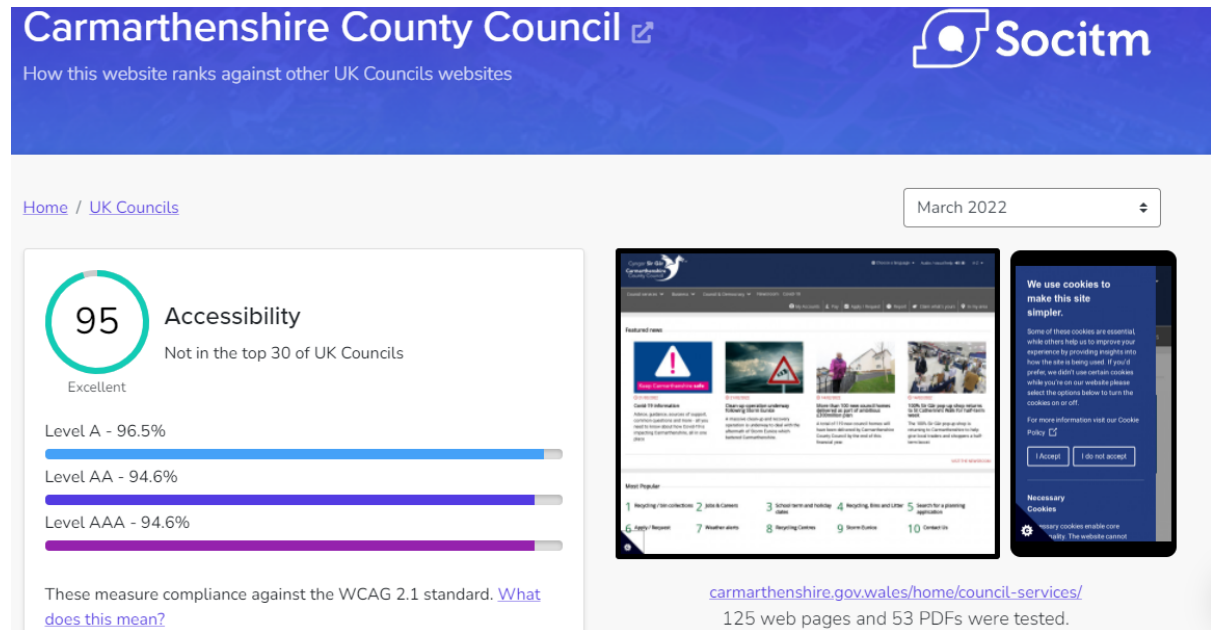
Accessibility

In this section

- Our accessibility statement
- How accessible is this website?
- Feedback and contact information
- Reporting accessibility problems with this website
- Enforcement procedure
- Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person
- Technical information about this website's accessibility
- What we're doing to improve accessibility
- How we test this website

We work in partnership with the Society for Innovation, Technology, and Modernisation (SOCITM) to enable us to maintain our website accessibility with a detailed service from Silktide. Automated assessments return actions to help you develop the best possible experience for your visitors, as well as complying with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility guidelines.

Our current rating is Excellent, and our website is benchmarked against websites across the Public Sector in the UK. 470 organisations are currently part of the SilkTide benchmarking with Carmarthenshire County Council currently featuring at number 95.



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

Case study 6: Integrated Impact Assessment

Impact assessments are an important practical tool for helping us understand and mitigate the possible impact of our decisions on our residents, customers, and services. Impact assessments help us to ensure we have considered how different groups and services could be affected by our proposals, enabling us to strengthen positive aspects and mitigate any potentially negative impacts. Impact assessments ultimately provide an opportunity for us to evidence our thought process and to challenge assumptions in developing new proposals. As a result, impact assessments can help ensure that new proposals are effective and relevant to achieving the Council's vision of enabling all our citizens to "start, live and age well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment".

The IT & Corporate Policy Division have been leading on the introduction of an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This is because the Council has a statutory requirement to complete impact assessments under a number of new and existing legislation.

Our Assessment incorporates the requirements of the following Acts into one platform:

- 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).

The completion of the IIA has been digitised through the Firmstep platform and now incorporates the full requirements of the Democratic committee cover sheet content. All content can now be completed, updated, and submitted through the online tool. The IIA will also be incorporated as part of the Democratic papers prepared for our Elected Members as part of the mod.gov platform.

Integrated Impact Assessment Report

Carmarthenshire County Council Integrated Impact Assessment

Introduction	Proposal Details	Implications	Five ways of working	Equalities	Welsh Language	Socio-Economic duty	Rights of the Child
Environment (Wales) Act & Net Zero Carbon	Data Protection	Consultations	Documents	Coversheet Translation	Committee Details	Cabinet Summary	
Meeting Calendar	Revision History						

Does the report need a full impact assessment? *

Yes No



Does the report need Head of Service approval? *

Yes No

Does the report need Director approval? *

Yes No

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (The Socio-Economic Duty requires us, when making strategic decisions, to consider how our decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Inequality of outcome relates to any measurable differences in outcome between those who have experienced socio-economic disadvantage and the rest of the population. It also requires us to understand the views and needs of those impacted by the decision, particularly those who face economic disadvantage)

What evidence do you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this decision? *

Have you engaged with those effected by the decision? *

Have you considered communities and places of interest? *

What are the main impacts of the proposal? *

During 2021/22, the team have been supporting the introduction of the IIA through the following steps:

- We worked with Anna Morgan, an external consultant, to provide detailed training on the IIA and the legislative requirements. The training was provided to all Heads of Service and to 55 of our most regular report authors, who prepare policies, strategies and lead on projects which need Democratic approval.
- We held specific sessions for our Cabinet Members and provided a detailed demonstration of the online tool, working through the questions and evidence required in completing an assessment.
- We worked with our departments to identify policies, strategies and projects which required an IIA with a clear view of developing a forward work programme of IIA completion and to ensure that the IIA is commenced from the onset of any development work.
- The new IIA process will be fully rolled out across the Council during 2022-23.

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

Case study 7: Community Cohesion 2021 – 22

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 works on areas including Hate Crime, Cohesion Campaigns, with minority groups such as Refugees and the Gypsy Traveller Community, Community Tensions and training opportunities. The team also coordinate a Small Grants scheme for community projects with a focus on Cohesion.

Hate Crime Awareness

Hate Crime Awareness Week was in October 2021 and the Cohesion Team took part in a regional working group to ensure initiatives were coordinated and mapped. 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:

- Virtual Coffee Morning, in collaboration with Victim Support
- Social Media slots with Local Authorities
- Sharing the Cohesion Hate Crime Awareness 1 min film
- Promoted an event on Migrant Rights via networks across the region.
- 4 pre HCAW online events in collaboration with Victim Support.

The Cohesion team also ran, in collaboration with Victim Support, a Youth Groups Project culminating in groups designing t-shirts celebrating diversity. The team organized and attended 2 prize awarding events, resulting from a joint Cohesion and Victim Support led competition to celebrate Hate Crime Awareness Week. The winning designs were made into t-shirts and awarded to the winners by Local Authority Cabinet representatives who hold the Community portfolios. The winners being Haverfordwest Young Carers and Dr Mz's LGBTQ+ youth group.

Online Hate Pilot Session

In March 2022, working with Victim Support, the team co-hosted an event around Online Hate. The event, held in March and was promoted by Facebook administrators (local area/interest groups). Additional general promotion took place on Safer Internet Day in early February. 38 people attended the pilot and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The session will be delivered in other parts of Wales during 2022.

Online Hate Workshop

Do you look after a community space online? Whether you're involved in a local town Facebook group, interest groups, host online gaming leagues and more...

If you live or work in Mid & West Wales (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion & Powys), join us for this FREE virtual workshop on online hate.

Wednesday 16th February:
10:30am - 12pm
OR
6pm to 7:30pm

How to book:
 slbowen@carmarthen
 shire.gov.uk
 07580450012

- Myth busting
- Know what to do if you encounter hate on your group
- Who to report it to
- What to do if you're concerned about escalation
- Support for you if you're affected by online hate

Small Steps RW Training

The team coordinated the roll out of 4 sessions delivered by Small Steps on Awareness and Counter Narrative on Right Wing activity. Small Steps employ staff members who are former far-right activists, this gives the benefit of having lived experience. The training outlines grievances manipulated by the far right, a local and national activity breakdown, recruitment techniques and counter narrative ideas explained. The training was promoted and supported by the Regional CONTEST board.

Community tensions

The Cohesion team chair weekly multi-agency Tension Monitoring meetings in the four Local Authority areas. This is useful for understanding issues and hotspots of tensions within our communities, and where appropriate develop mitigation. Partners include Dyfed Powys Police, Special Branch, Hywel Dda University Health Board, Mid and West Wales Fire Service, Victim Support, Race Council Cymru, Travelling Ahead, University of Wales Trinity Saint David and various departments within the Local Authority.

Small Grant funding for Cohesion Projects

The team made available a third round of grant funding to develop projects which support cohesion principles. Work included supporting the development of online events, resources materials or other initiatives which improve relations within our communities. Applications were encouraged which sought to carry 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.

Black History Month

The Cohesion Team funded an event (as part of a small grants project) in Llanelli, run by People Speak Up. Entitled Spoken Word Saturday, Storyteller Phil Okwedy shared stories from his Nigerian descendants, his life on being a black man in Wales and his love for traditional storytelling. More than 50 individuals attended this event which also celebrated Hate Crime Awareness Week.

LGBTQ History Month

The team coordinated the social media messaging across the 4 counties. Also, linking in with some of the Small Grants Funded projects who are developing initiatives for events during the month and will be promoting these such as CETMA's Loud and Proud Tour 2022 visiting Llanelli, Tumble, Cardigan/Newcastle Emlyn, Llandovery, Carmarthen, and Kidwelly. There were also Zoom sessions running which the team promoted. Community Cohesion also funded an event at the Nurture Centre, Carmarthen, developed by "On your face", an LGBTQ+ platform aiming to bring the queer creatives of Wales to the forefront. The event included an exhibition by various artists from the collective, live music, workshops, talks, open mic and a food stall.

International Day of Disabled People

The team funded workshops delivered to coincide with both Carers Rights Day (25th November) and International Day of Disabled people (3rd December). The aim was to promote self-advocacy to carers, helping them to realise when speaking up for oneself is required, equipping carers with tools to speak up regarding their needs, accessing policy information and facilitating continued online support.

Cohesion in our Communities event

In March the team ran an event on cohesion in action, sharing good practice and lessons learnt from three of the Small Grants projects they funded. Project leads delivered 15-minute presentations, featuring community participants, online content and podcasts developed as part of the programme. The target audience for this session was community groups or organisations who may be interested in developing projects of their own. 42 people attended. In terms of feedback:

- 100% of attendees found the session interesting
- 100% of attendees would recommend the session to colleagues.
- The session met the expectations of 100% of attendees.
- 86% of attendees felt they would be interested in running similar projects in their own communities.



Cohesion in our Communities

Hear from projects that have strengthened our neighbourhoods and celebrated difference and diversity

Project Leaders include:

- Becca Rosenthal (Faces & Places)
- Phillipa Wisdom (FaN Penally)
- Sioned Camplin (Arts Connection):

WEDNESDAY 2nd MARCH 2022
11:00-13:30
VIA MS TEAMS
FREE TO ATTEND

Come along to a free online session, facilitated by the Mid and South West Wales Community Cohesion Team and be inspired by the stories some experienced. By sharing good ideas, we can develop new ways of reaching our hardest to reach communities

To book a place please email:
sibowen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk



Ukraine

The team are part of a weekly meetings around Cohesion and another on support. Specifically, the team has been scoping the faith offer for arrivals, as well as working with the 4 Local Authorities on the necessary arrangements for the other two schemes. The Community Cohesion team meet weekly with the new Pastoral Care for Ukrainian Network, to look at faith accessibility in our communities also. The group included Fathers from the Orthodox churches across the region, and also the Father from Cardiff and is Chaired by Cytun.

The team have also developed a Cultural considerations document which has been added to several welcome packs across Wales.

The team have helped facilitate mental health trauma-based sessions for sponsor families and daily online drop-in sessions for Ukrainian arrivals. This is a free to attend daily trauma and resilience meetings online for Ukrainian citizens to give them the opportunity to chat to people experiencing the same things. The sessions are 45 minutes long.

The team are working with Victim Support who are developing a toolkit for Ukrainian communities and individuals (or those supporting Ukrainians) who may experience hate crime.

The team participated and presented at the Carmarthenshire Schools Peace Sharing Event in support for Ukraine. All Carmarthenshire primary schools joined up in a virtual expression of support, Cohesion was an allocated presentation place in which we reiterated the need to support each other and Cohesion Values.

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.

During 2021/22, the Partnership has continued to meet regularly, and the following areas have been an area of focus:

- **Public Realm** changes introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and the relaxation of regulations. This includes the measures put in place to ensure the safety of our pedestrians as they accessed our high streets and essential services during the pandemic. Disability Partnership members have 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.
- **Accessibility of Pembrey Country Park** and the resources available at the site. The Outdoor Recreation Team have prepared a detailed Accessibility Statement, which identifies the physical adaptations and management measures provided through all areas of Pembrey Country Park to facilitate access to all.

Accessibility Guide

Pembrey Country Park



- **Electric Vehicle Charging Bays** – Carmarthenshire County Council has prepared an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy and members of the Coalition have raised valid issues in terms of the accessibility requirements for adapted vehicles. The concerns are focussed on provision which has been in place before the introduction of disabled friendly EV Charging equipment. The new EV Charging facility in Cross Hands is fully accessible; however, we are committed to looking at the new adapted technology in order to improve the older EV charging points in the county.
- **Hywel Dda University Health Board** – working with colleagues from the health board who are members of the partnership, we have been able to discuss key projects and development and gain feedback from our Disability Coalition members. This includes work on the ‘Building a Healthier future after COVID-19’ consultation.



Building a healthier future after COVID-19

Have your say



Our aim for 2022-23 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:

Policy and Involvement Team

IT & Corporate Policy Division

01267 224914

equalities@carmarthenshire.gov.uk