

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 03/10/2023

Title: Draft Ceredigion Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28

Purpose of the report: To present the draft Equality Plan and accompanying engagement report, and to seek approval to undertake a public consultation on the draft plan

For: Decision

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:

Cllr Catrin M S. Davies, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Customer Services

Introduction

Ceredigion County Council is a specified public body under the Equality Act 2010. The Specific Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales requires us to set out our Equality Objectives and then review every four years. The revised objectives for 2024-28 and accompanying action plan must be published by 31st of March 2024.

A regional engagement campaign was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the state of equality in the Dyfed Powys area. The campaign ran from 22 May 2023 until 2 August 2023. A report about this engagement campaign is attached as Appendix 2.

The findings of the engagement campaign have been considered, along with evidence from previous consultations and discussions at Ceredigion Equalities Workgroup meetings. The result is our draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28, see Appendix 1.

We have reviewed our Equality Objectives in light of our engagement and research. Our conclusion is that our objectives are still fit for purpose but, due to the changing nature of society and the work we have undertaken up to now, we need to amend the actions we will take to achieve the objectives.

Our Equality Objectives are:

1. To be an Exemplar Equal Opportunities Employer
2. To Foster Good Relations and Tackle Prejudice
3. To ensure Engagement and Participation
4. To ensure Dignity, Respect and Access to Services
5. To provide Fair and Inclusive Education

Once approved by Cabinet, the draft plan will go out to public consultation in Winter 2023. When the public consultation is concluded and any required amendments are made, the final plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet for approval in February 2024.

The Draft Strategic Equality plan 2024-28, attached as Appendix 1, is scheduled to be published on our website by 31st March 2024.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

Yes

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: This is a four-year plan which builds on previous plans. Long-standing equality issues can be carried from one four-year plan to the next. This enables us to address longer term needs and plan for the future.

Collaboration: There are many opportunities to collaborate with others to deliver the plan. For example, the new graduate scheme will require collaboration with universities; we will work with Victim Support to achieve the Hate Crime Trustmark and we will work with the Regional Community Cohesion team on a range of actions.

Involvement: A regional engagement campaign was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the state of equality in the Dyfed Powys area. The responses contributed to the Development of this draft Plan. The draft Plan will go out to public consultation again in winter 2023 before it is formally approved. The Equality plan itself includes actions to do more with groups of stakeholders from specified minority groups and to improve the way that we feedback to those who have participated in our Engagement and consultation campaigns.

Prevention: The plan has been developed as a result of our engagement and research into the current state of equality in Ceredigion. The aim of the plan is to coordinate our resources to identify and address the root causes of inequality.

Integration: The Equalities working group includes representatives from a range of Council Services. This helps us to consider interdependencies and possible tensions between services.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) To approve the Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.
- 2) To approve a public consultation on the Draft Plan over winter 2023.

Reasons for decision:

This will progress the aim of the Council to address inequality, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not in Ceredigion.

Overview and Scrutiny:

The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 11/09/2023. Following discussion, Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet endorse the Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 before it goes out to public consultation over winter 2023.

Policy Framework:

Corporate Strategy 2023-28
Strategic Equality Plan

Corporate Well-being Objectives:

- Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment
- Creating Caring and Healthy Communities
- Providing the Best Start in Life and Enabling Learning at All Ages
- Creating Sustainable, Green and Well-connected Communities

Finance and Procurement implications:

None

Legal Implications:

The Equality Act 2010 and the specific Public Sector Equality Duties (Wales) require us to publish Equality Objectives and to review these at least every four years.

Staffing implications:

None

Property / asset implications:

None

Risk(s):

There is a risk of reputational damage, complaint and legal challenge if we do not comply with the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duties (Wales).

Statutory Powers:

Equality Act 2010

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1- Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28
Appendix 2- Engagement Report
Appendix 3- Integrated Impact Assessment

Corporate Lead Officer:

Alun Williams, Corporate Lead Officer: Policy, Performance and Public Protection

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Cathryn Morgan, Equalities and Inclusion Manager

Date:

12/09/2023

A Fair and Equal Ceredigion 2024-28

Ceredigion County Council Strategic Equality Plan



Author: Partnerships and Performance CM

Approved by Cabinet: XX/XX/XXXX

Publication Date: XX/XX/XXXX

How to contact us:

Comments and suggestions to help us improve and best perform as an equal opportunities' organisation can be submitted at any time to the:

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1. Introduction

This is our fourth Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2024-28. It describes how we will continue towards our aim to meet our commitment to equality and how we will meet our obligations set out in the Equality Act 2010.

During the summer of 2023 we worked with colleagues in the Mid and West Wales region to gather people's views on equality in our local area. We have also drawn on a rich evidence source from previous campaigns carried out by the council and Welsh Government, for example, our Assessment of Local Well-being (March 2022), our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (June 2022) and Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Plan (July 2022). There is more information in our Engagement report 2023.

We have reviewed our Equality Objectives in light of our engagement and research into the current state of equality in Ceredigion. Our conclusion is that our objectives are still fit for purpose but, due to the changing nature of society and the work we have undertaken up to now, we need to amend the actions we will take to achieve the objectives. Our Equality Objectives are:

1. To be an Exemplar Equal Opportunities Employer
2. To Foster Good Relations and Tackle Prejudice
3. To ensure Engagement and Participation
4. To ensure Dignity, Respect and Access to Services
5. To provide Fair and Inclusive Education

2. Background

2.1 The General Equality Duty

The aim of the general equality duty is to ensure that we consider the needs of all individuals when carrying out our day-to-day work, in developing policy, in delivering services and in relation to the public and to our workforce. Public bodies must 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 protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment if they share one or more of the following 'protected characteristics'.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Some people share more than one of these characteristics. This is called 'intersectionality'. The impact of intersectionality may vary, and it is difficult to quantify. We need to be aware of this when we develop policy, promote equality and address discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

2.2 Welsh Language Commitment

The promotion and use of the Welsh Language is covered by the requirements of the Welsh Language Measure 2011 rather than the Equality Act, it. However, in Ceredigion we consider Welsh Language requirements alongside the protected characteristics of the Equality Act to encourage a co-operative approach to the needs of all communities in designing and delivering services.

The Welsh Language Measure 2011 requires us to ensure that Welsh Language services are built into the planning and delivery of services. We must offer Welsh Language services to Welsh speakers without them having to request it. This is called the 'active offer'.

2.3 Socio-economic Duty

The Socio-economic duty came into force in Wales in 2021. It aims to improve decision making and help those who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Socio-economic disadvantage means having low savings or income compared to others in Wales, making it more difficult to access basic services and opportunities. This can lead to inequality of outcome, for instance lower levels of good health, lower paid work, poorer educational attainment and an increased risk of being a victim of crime.

We need to understand how the decisions that we make may increase or reduce opportunities for people who are at socio-economic disadvantage. We do this with our equality impact assessment which is included in our Integrated Impact Assessment Tool.

2.4 The Specific Public Sector Equality Duties (Wales)

In addition to meeting the general duty, public bodies like the council must meet the following specific duties:

- Setting Equality Objectives and publishing a Strategic Equality Plan.
- Engaging with people in relation to the protected characteristics.
- Collecting and publishing information relevant to compliance with the General Duty.
- Annual publishing of employment monitoring information.
- Ensuring that our workforce know and understand our duty under the Equality Act.
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments of relevant policies and practices
- Addressing unfair pay differences.
- Establishing relevant conditions to meet the general duty in procurement processes.
- Reviewing progress on the Strategic Equality Plan and our Equality Objectives.

3. Ceredigion profile

3.1 Ceredigion citizens

Ceredigion has a population of 71,475. If we could shrink our population to a village of approximately 100 people, there would be:

- 51 females and 49 males.
- 14 children aged 15 years, or younger and 6 young people aged 16 to 19 years.
- 54 people aged between 20 and 64.
- 22 people aged between 65 and 84 and 3 people aged 85 or older.
- 12 university students (this is an estimate based on [Where do HE students study? | HESA](#))
- 1 person whose gender is now different to what it was when they were born. 8 people would prefer not to tell you their gender identity.
- 5 people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or queer. 10 people would prefer not to tell you their sexual orientation.



- 4 people who are from a variety of non-White ethnic backgrounds.
- 46 people who are Christian, 2 people who have another religion, 43 people who have no religion. 8 people would prefer not to tell you about their beliefs or non-beliefs.
- 45 people who are able to speak Welsh. 7 of these would be 65 years or older.
- 22 people who are classed as disabled under the Equality Act. 9 of these people have a lot of difficulties with their day-to-day activities.
- 11 people who provide unpaid care to a member of their family or a friend.

Source: ONS [2021 Census Profile for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://nomisweb.co.uk)

When we consider this image of the people of Ceredigion living together, it's easy to appreciate the diversity of our population and the need for us to acknowledge and understand everyone's preferences and needs. It is important that marginalised and seldom heard groups of people are involved in decisions and are able to access services.

3.2 Ceredigion County Council

Ceredigion County Council is responsible for ensuring that we carry out our work in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is properly accounted for, and used efficiently, and effectively.

We are committed to improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of the people who live in, work in, study in and visit Ceredigion. This commitment is set out in our Corporate Strategy 2012-2027 which describes how the council will meet the challenges ahead and make the most of opportunities. Our Corporate Well-being Objectives for this period are:

1. Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment
2. Creating Caring and Healthy Communities
3. Providing the Best Start in Life and Enabling Learning at All Ages
4. Creating Sustainable, Green and Well-connected Communities

Local Councillors are elected by the community to decide how the council should carry out its activities. They represent the public interest as well as the interests of individuals living within the ward in which they have been elected. There are 38 Councillors that represent the 34 electoral wards in Ceredigion.

The council is responsible for a wide range of services, such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care, road maintenance, public health, protecting vulnerable children, individuals and families, housing, leisure, museums and libraries. The council employs 2,037 people to deliver our services.

All our services need to work together to make sure that we achieve our equality objectives. Our Equalities Workgroup helps us to do this. The workgroup includes a representative from

a range of relevant services and meets regularly to monitor the progress of our work on equality and to share good practice across services.

Below are our Equality Objectives for 2024-28 and the actions that we will take to address inequality, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not in Ceredigion.

4. Our Equality Objectives

4.1 To be an Exemplar Equal Opportunities Employer

As the largest employer in the county the Council recognises and welcomes its responsibility of promoting equality and valuing diversity across our workforce and recruitment practices.

We support Welsh Government's ambitions to employ a workforce that represents our population, and that employment inequalities for black, Asian and minority ethnic people are reduced.

The top four groups that respondents to our regional survey rated as having a worse, or much worse experience of work than the population as a whole were disabled people, people from an ethnic minority, older people (aged 65+) and people who are pregnant or have recently given birth.

We are confident that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs across the Council. However, currently there are fewer women in senior roles than men and a higher proportion of women relative to men in lower scales.

It is well-known and an often-discussed issue that many young people leave the county to pursue opportunities elsewhere in Wales or further afield across the UK. We anticipate that our graduate scheme and apprenticeship schemes will help to address this.

We must make sure that our workforce, particularly staff that deal directly with the public and key decision makers, understand the diverse needs of all our citizens and are sufficiently informed to be able to respond to these needs.

“Work opportunities for disabled people in public bodies do not do enough to promote and recruit disabled people in employment beyond lower paid positions. In public services, there are additional barriers, such as the requirement to speak Welsh which indirectly discriminates against deaf people since there are no Welsh accessible courses for deaf people in the whole of Wales.”

“For all public services to have more anti racist training, employ staff from diverse backgrounds, and know that black people can also be Welsh and belong”.

“People of colour not even given a chance.”

(Regional Equality survey, 2023)

Actions to achieve this Equality Objective

4.1.1 We will publish an annual gender pay gap report and take action to encourage a more even mix of men and women in lower grade and higher-grade jobs.

How we will measure success:

The percentage of people applying for jobs, and being appointed, reflects Ceredigion population demographic (Census 2021)

4.1.2 We will publish an annual workforce equality report and take action to encourage proportionate representation in our workforce, particularly in the social care workforce and in senior management.

How we will measure success:

The percentage of people applying for jobs, and being appointed, reflects Ceredigion population demographic (Census 2021)

4.1.3 We will review HR policies and recruitment literature so that they reflect the needs and the diverse identities of the community in which we live.

How we will measure success:

HR policies and recruitment literature are reviewed and updated where appropriate.

4.1.4 We will continue to develop and deliver a range of cultural awareness and equalities training.

How we will measure success:

Increased number of staff, managers and elected members completing cultural awareness and equalities training.

4.1.5 We will promote our graduate scheme and develop a coordinated approach to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

How we will measure success:

Number of work experience opportunities offered, number of apprentices recruited, and number of graduates recruited under the graduate scheme.

4.1.6 We will build on our employee engagement activities and continue to ensure all our workforce's voices inform decision making.

How we will measure success:

Percentage of employees feel that the Council cares about their health and wellbeing.

4.2 To Foster Good Relations and Tackle Prejudice

Victim Support has seen a stark increase in demand for its hate crime support services. This rise was driven largely because of racial and homophobic related incidences.

The three main themes of the 'hopes and wishes' expressed at Aberystwyth Pride event in April 2023 were 'inclusion, acceptance and safety'.

The top four groups that respondents to our regional survey rated as having a worse, or much worse experience of getting on together in the community than the population as a whole were disabled people, people from an ethnic minority, people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual and transgender people.

We support Welsh Government's commitment to celebrate and improve the representation of LGBTQ+ people and black, Asian and minority ethnic people in the heritage and culture of Wales.

Ageism underpins many of the issues currently faced by older people, resulting in older people being treated unfairly, feeling socially excluded and their rights not being respected. Age-friendly communities challenge ageism by bringing people of different ages together and fostering positive images of ageing.

Our Integrated Impact Assessment tool enables decision makers to consider the impact of our decisions on people who share one or more of the characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act (2010). It also helps us to identify actions we can take to improve relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't.

Actions to achieve this Equality Objective

4.2.1 We will monitor the use of, and provide advice on, Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA)

How we will measure success:

Number of IIA to the required standard submitted with Cabinet papers / the total number of IIA required = % success

4.2.2 We will implement our commitment to Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter and use the Hate Crime Charter Trustmark where appropriate.

How we will measure success:

"Racism and disability hate issues are rife. Sexism is rife and it's hard to feel safe".

(Regional Equality survey, 2023)

"Stop propagating transphobic jokes, criticism, discrimination, violence etc and come to see the normality of trans individuals."

I wish..."For people to not feel ashamed or scared to live as their authentic self."

(Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)

We are listed as an active partner on the Victim Support website and use the Hate Crime Trustmark on our website, recruitment campaigns and other appropriate places.

4.2.3 We will ensure that relevant collections, particularly those used as part of the delivery of the curriculum, celebrate diversity and encourage ant-racist engagement.

How we will measure success:

Percentage of people that agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (*National Survey of Wales/Annual Stakeholder Survey*)

4.2.4 We will support the Regional Community Cohesion team to monitor community tensions.

How we will measure success:

Multi-agency tension monitoring meetings are held weekly, and concerns are addressed appropriately.

4.2.5 We will support the Regional Community Cohesion team to deliver an annual media campaign to promote awareness, celebrate diversity, and commemorate relevant historical events.

How we will measure success:

Number of media campaigns promoted each year.

4.2.6 We will join the Age Friendly network and implement an action plan that reflects the needs of our ageing population.

How we will measure success:

We are a member of the Age Friendly network and are achieving the outcomes of our action plan.

4.3 To ensure Engagement and Participation

We value the contribution that Ceredigion residents make to help us develop and evaluate our services. We want to make it easier for everybody in Ceredigion to have a voice, particularly people who are underrepresented.

We support Welsh Government's commitment to see more underrepresented people participating in democracy, including standing for elected positions. We also support the ambition of the Women's Equality Network to see an equal balance of men and women in politics.

People who answered our equality survey felt that the top three groups of people who have the worse

"Things are increasingly online and there can be a digital divide which, arguably adversely affects older people".

"Consultation meetings, etc are nearly always inaccessible to deaf people. Thus, if you can't attend, you don't get to influence".

(*Regional Equality survey, 2023*)

experience of influencing decisions are people from ethnic minorities, people who are disabled and young people. They felt that men, older people, and Welsh speakers have the best experience of influencing decision, however it was pointed out that older people who don't use the internet are often left out as well.

We have more work to do inform stakeholders so that they have a better understanding of what the Council does and to enable them to be engaged in discussions about changing services. We need to do this in a variety of formats to make sure that everyone has opportunities to feedback and help shape services for the future.

“Most decision-making systems are run by older people and participated in by older people, so it can be quite an exclusive environment”.

“In my experience women are often ignored when they have an opinion”.

(Regional Equality survey, 2023)

Actions to achieve this Equality Objective

4.3.1 We will support programmes and plans to increase representation in local politics and decision making, particularly by young people, women, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

How we will measure success:

The percentage of women, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds that take part in local politics and decision making reflects Ceredigion population demographic (Census 2021)

4.3.2 We will develop the membership of Ceredigion Disability Forum.

How we will measure success:

Attendance at Forum meetings increases year by year and members feel engaged in local decision making (2023 average attendance = 6 people).

4.3.3 We will work with partners to establish a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic stakeholder forum so that we can better understand examples of good practice.

How we will measure success:

A Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic stakeholder group is established, and members feel engaged in local decision making.

4.3.4 We will work with partners to establish a LGBTQ+ stakeholder forum so that we can better understand examples of good practice.

How we will measure success:

A LGBTQ+ stakeholder group is established, and members feel engaged in local decision making.

4.3.5 We will develop and improve our use of online engagement platforms and our use of non-digital engagement methods.

How we will measure success:

Our engagement toolkit is developed and promoted. The Engagement Annual Report reflects improved engagement methods and is approved by Cabinet.

4.3.6 We will improve the way that we feedback to those who have participated in our engagement and consultation campaigns.

How we will measure success:

Our engagement toolkit is developed and promoted. The Engagement Annual Report reflects improved feedback and is approved by Cabinet.

4.4 To ensure Dignity, Respect and Access to Services

We support Welsh Government's commitment to ensure that our services are inclusive of the specific needs of LGBTQ+ people and people with different ethnic backgrounds, whether they speak Welsh, English or other languages.

Our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (June 2022) recognised that childcare for disabled children in Ceredigion is very limited and that childcare settings where staff are well trained and have experience of working with disabled children are hard to find.

Our Play Sufficiency Assessment (June 2022) recognised the need for Welsh language play opportunities and for single gender activities for children who are aged 10 years+ and their religion/culture requires them not to mix.

Our Assessment of Local Well-being (March 2022) recognised that greater provision of housing for older people, housing with care and nursing care is required in order to meet the needs of older people's preferences to stay independent and live in their home.

The main topic of discussion at Ceredigion Disability Forum meetings during 2022-23 was traffic and parking arrangements in Ceredigion towns. People who answered our equality survey felt that disabled people have a far worse experience of accessing transport and accessing the coast and countryside than the rest of the population.

"No Childcare available for disabled children and teenagers either during term time or school holidays in Ceredigion".

(Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, 2022)

"Balance the need to keep the Welsh language alive with the needs of people who do not speak Welsh".

"Accessibility isn't always built into online systems, and this can pose challenges for various disabilities".

"I know people who don't have the internet at all, and I find they are quite excluded from a lot of information".

"As a white woman in a relationship with a black woman I have experienced harassment on public transport in the past and this makes me wary to use public transport now if I can avoid it."

(Regional Equality survey, 2023)

People who answered our equality survey felt that disabled people have a worse, or much worse experience of accessing services than the rest of the population. The 2nd most disadvantaged cohorts were people from an ethnic minority and older people.

We want to increase the use of Welsh in all aspects of public life in Ceredigion, where people can live, learn, belong and succeed through the medium of Welsh.

“I would love to access the countryside but most of that isn’t disabled friendly either”.

Elderly and disabled are forgotten about and are not included in digital upgrading. Impractical suggestions are made, and they feel left behind and excluded”.

(Regional Equality survey, 2023)

Actions to achieve this Equality Objective

4.4.1 We will continue to actively promote our work Welsh development opportunities to meet service delivery needs and support our bilingual culture.

How we will measure success:

Number of employees who have improved their Welsh language skills (continuum)

4.4.2 We will continue to offer inclusive and specialised play and physical activity opportunities for disabled children and young people.

How we will measure success:

Number of inclusive and specialised opportunities offered or funded by the Council and number of disabled children and young people who attended.

4.4.3 We will continue to support inclusive and specialised childcare provision for disabled children and young people.

How we will measure success:

Number of inclusive and specialised childcare places offered or funded by the Council and number of disabled children and young people who attended.

4.4.4 We will establish an integrated model of community care and housing in Tregaron.

How we will measure success:

Cylch Caron project is completed.

4.4.5 We will consider the needs of disabled people when maintaining or improving footways and carriageways (for example dropped kerbs and disabled parking).

How we will measure success:

All maintenance and improvements to footways and carriageways follow Department for Transport Inclusive Mobility guidance.

4.4.6 We will work towards achieving a rating of AAA for our website.

How we will measure success:

Pdf documents are no longer used as the primary method of updating information on our website.

4.4.7 We will continue to develop the methods we use to communicate with the public.

How we will measure success:

Our Engagement toolkit is updated, accessed regularly and training is delivered on its use.

4.4.8 We will provide housing that meets the needs of our communities

How we will measure success:

Evidence of housing need and number of clients from specific groups rehoused in suitable accommodation.

4.4.9 We will review our Toilet Strategy so that it reflects the needs of our changing population where reasonably and practicably possible.

How we will measure success:

The revised Toilet Strategy reflects the needs of people with disabilities and people with various gender identities.

4.4.10 We will work with partners to develop sustainable and affordable travel solutions.

How we will measure success:

An action plan is developed and implemented that enables appropriate access to our services.

4.4.11 We will ensure that the principles of the Welsh Language Standards underpin the way the Council deliver its services to the public, so that service users are able to access services naturally in the Welsh language, should they choose to do so.

How we will measure success:

Our Welsh Language Compliance Report is deemed satisfactory by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

4.5 To provide Fair and Inclusive Education

We must make sure that children, young people, and adults in Ceredigion have fair and equal access to education. Everyone has the right to be free from discrimination, bullying and abuse in education settings, including in lifelong learning and further education.

Our last Strategic Equality Plan included an action to implement Welsh Government's Anti-Bullying Guidance 2020. The guidance has been updated to reflect the ambitions of the Anti-racist Wales action plan and we need to make sure that all our schools implement the updated version.

We support Welsh Government's commitment to support LGBTQ+ young people and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and to implement a whole school approach that is fully LGBTQ+ inclusive.

The top three groups that respondents to our regional survey rated as having a worse, or much worse experience of education than the population as a whole were disabled people, people from an ethnic minority and people who are pregnant or have recently given birth.

Actions to achieve this Equality Objective

4.5.1 We will adopt and implement Welsh Government's national trans guidance.

How we will measure success:

Adoption of the national trans guidance is approved by Cabinet and implemented by schools in Ceredigion.

4.5.2 We will work towards ensuring that School Governing bodies represent the range of diversity of the pupils within the education setting.

How we will measure success:

Percentage of school governing bodies whose members reflect the diversity of the pupils within their settings.

4.5.3 We will ensure that anti-bullying policies in schools and education settings reflect WG's updated version of the anti-bullying guidance, 'Rights, Respect, Equality.'

"make school a better place and stop bullies"

Children and Young People Festival, 2023

"Require schools to allow Pride clubs/other identity clubs. Not require them to have them, just to allow them".

Aberystwyth Pride, 2023

"Although it is a Welsh medium School, the children speak English with their friends – it's heart-breaking to take our children to a Welsh School and for them to speak English".

"With limited funding, seeking support for pupils with disability in education can be a challenge".

Equality survey, 2023

How we will measure success:

Adoption of Welsh Government's update anti-bullying policy is approved by Cabinet and implemented by schools in Ceredigion.

4.5.4 We will implement our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-32

How we will measure success:

Implementation of the plan is progressing as planned and monitoring reports are approved by Cabinet.

4.5.5 We will improve educational provision and outcomes for children with additional learning needs (ALN) and reduce the attainment gap between children without ALN and those with ALN.

How we will measure success:

All pupils with ALN make appropriate progress and this is evidenced by data on the achievement of ALN pupils at all key stages.

4.5.6 We will continue to support older people and disabled people to take advantage of digital technologies, and to recognise the benefits of being online.

How we will measure success:

Number of people over 50 and the number of people with a disability or additional learning need who enrol with Dysgu Bro for a digital literacy class/workshop.

5. Conclusion

This draft Strategic Equality Plan will now be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in October 2023.

Once approved, the draft plan will go out to public consultation in Winter 2023. When the public consultation is concluded and any required amendments are made, the final plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in February 2024.

The new Strategic Equality plan 2024-28 is scheduled to be published on our website by 1st April 2024.

Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023

Analysis Report of the engagement campaign



Mae'r dogfen hyn hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg



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1. Method

A regional engagement campaign was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the state of equality in the Dyfed Powys area. The campaign ran from 22 May 2023 until 2 August 2023.

The Mid and West Wales Equality and Diversity group includes Ceredigion, Powys, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire County Councils, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board, Dyfed Powys Police, the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the County Voluntary Councils for each county (CAVO, CAVS, PAVO and PAVS), University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Aberystwyth University and Pembrokeshire Coast and Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authorities.

Together we created a survey (available in Welsh, English, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Romanian and Easy Read) and a bilingual poster. People were invited to complete the survey online or to request a paper copy at our libraries and leisure centres or by post via Clic.

In Ceredigion an email message was sent to the list of stakeholders below with a link to the online information and printable copies of the survey and poster attached. Everyone was asked to complete the survey, to display the poster and to share the information with their networks. They were asked to contact us if they needed copies of the survey and the poster to be posted to them.

Ceredigion County Council stakeholder list:

- Children and Young People Service Provider Forum (105 members)
- Early Years, Childcare and Play group (42 members)
- Ceredigion Council Equalities Workgroup (46 members)
- Ceredigion County Councillors
- Ceredigion Town and Community Council clerks
- Disability Forum members (55 individuals/groups by email plus 199 via their Facebook page)
- Coleg Ceredigion
- Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training
- Health Board Maternity Voices group
- School services

The information was placed on the Youth Council's MS Teams site and on Ceredigion Council staff MS Teams site. It was also promoted on social media and by a [press release](#) on 25/05/2023.

We do not rely on the online survey alone, however. We have a rich source of evidence from previous engagement campaigns undertaken by Ceredigion Council, and by Welsh Government. This data has informed the revision of our current Equality Objectives and development of our new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

A lot of qualitative information has been gathered from comments submitted with the online survey. Further statements were collected at Aberystwyth Pride event in April 2023 and at Ceredigion Children and Young People Festival in August 2023.

Discussions were also held at a meeting with the Disability Forum and with the Children and Young People Service Provider Forum, both in July 2023. A selection of these comments is listed at [Section 3](#).

Relevant local engagement and consultation campaigns

[Childcare Sufficiency Assessment \(June 2022\)](#)

[Play Sufficiency Assessment \(June 2022\)](#)

[Ceredigion Assessment of Local Well-being \(March 2022\)](#)

[Ceredigion Age-friendly self-assessment \(2022-23\)](#)

Relevant national engagement and consultation campaigns

[Anti-racist Wales Action Plan | GOV.WALES \(July 2022\)](#)

[Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales \(February 2023\)](#)

Ceredigion Strategic Equalities workgroup meets regularly. We have discussed our local response to the Anti-racist Wales action plan and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales. We have identified actions needed to show our commitment to Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter which the Council signed up to in 2022. We also recognise that some of the actions in our current Strategic Equality Plan require more work.

Concerns have been raised by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, particularly about the increased dependence on online methods of communication, to which many older people don't have access.

We have also considered feedback from 170 children and 84 parents at Ceredigion play sessions relating to Welsh Government's Child Poverty consultation. They were asked, "What 3 things would make the biggest difference to children and their families now and in the future?" The top response was, "help with the costs of food, fuel and housing" and 2nd was "to be treated with respect regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnicity."

2. Equality Survey Responses

237 respondents completed the regional equality survey. 72 of the responses were from Ceredigion. 67 of these were from individuals and 5 from an organisation (Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership, Ceredigion County Council, Llandysul Town Council and Llangwryfon and Llanrhystud Community Councils). No paper copies were returned.

There were 73 responses from Carmarthenshire, 28 from Powys, 60 from Pembrokeshire, 3 from Swansea and 1 from 'Hywel Dda'.

The average response rate for UK public consultations stands at 0.7%. The Ceredigion response to the survey itself was lower (0.1% of the population). However, the response rate from people who share characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act was generally higher than our population percentages, examples are shown in the graphs below.

Fig 1.

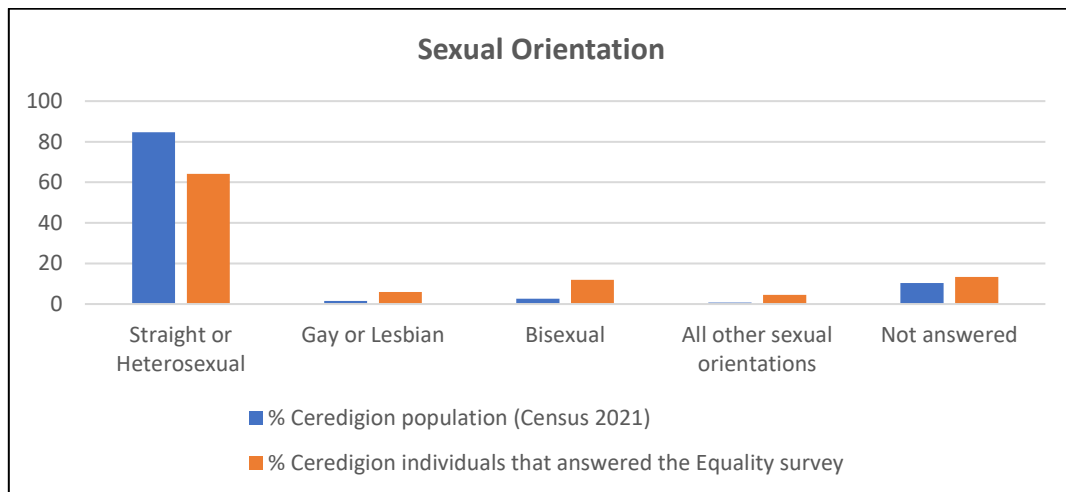


Fig 2.

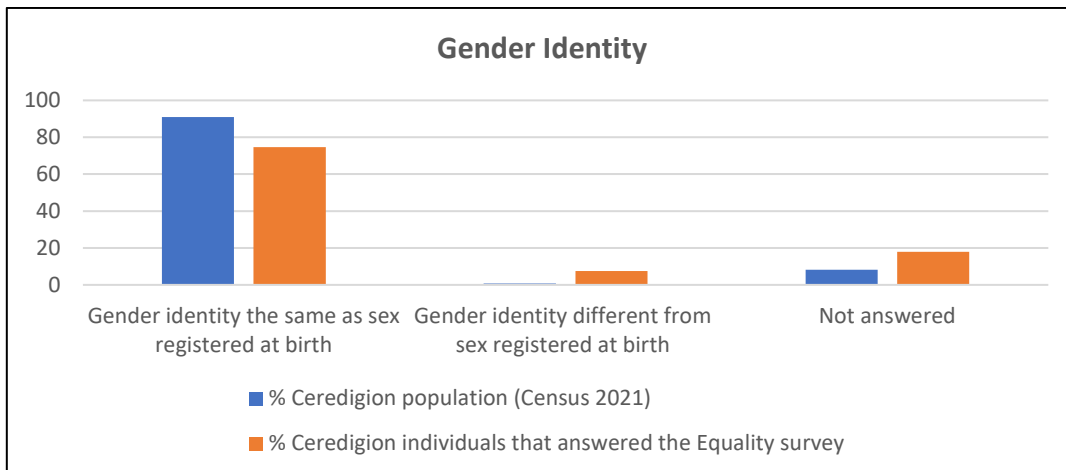


Fig 3.

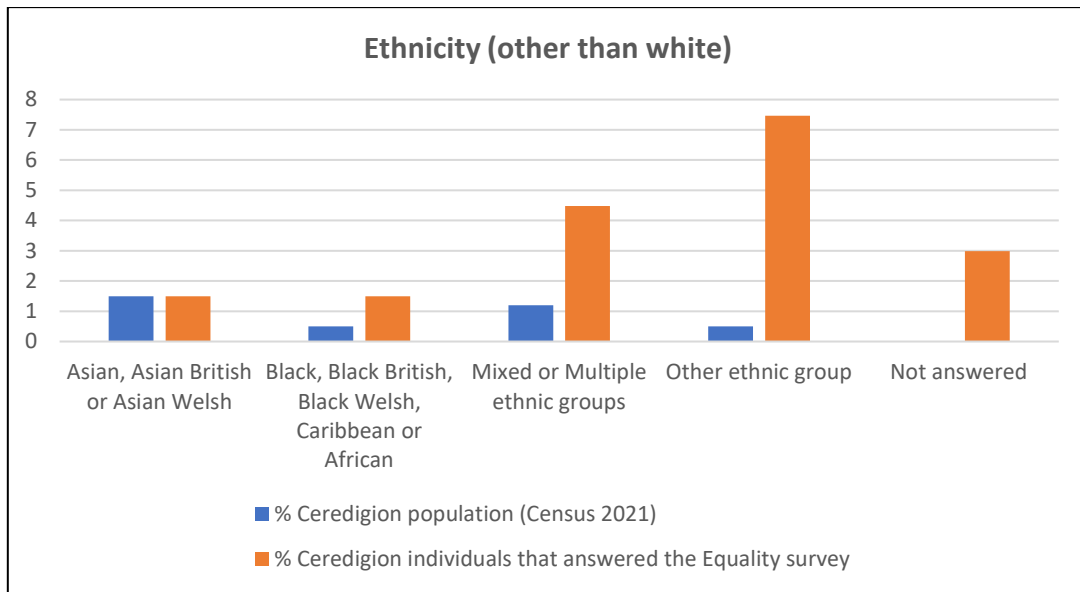


Fig 4.

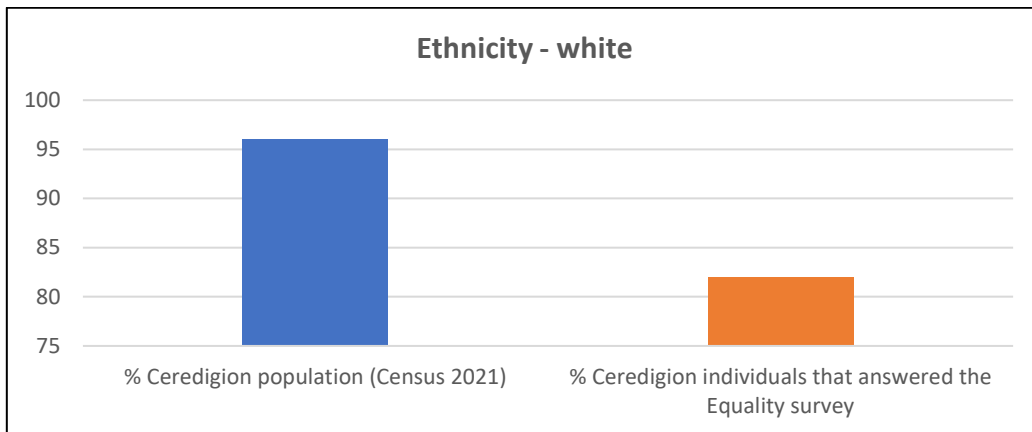
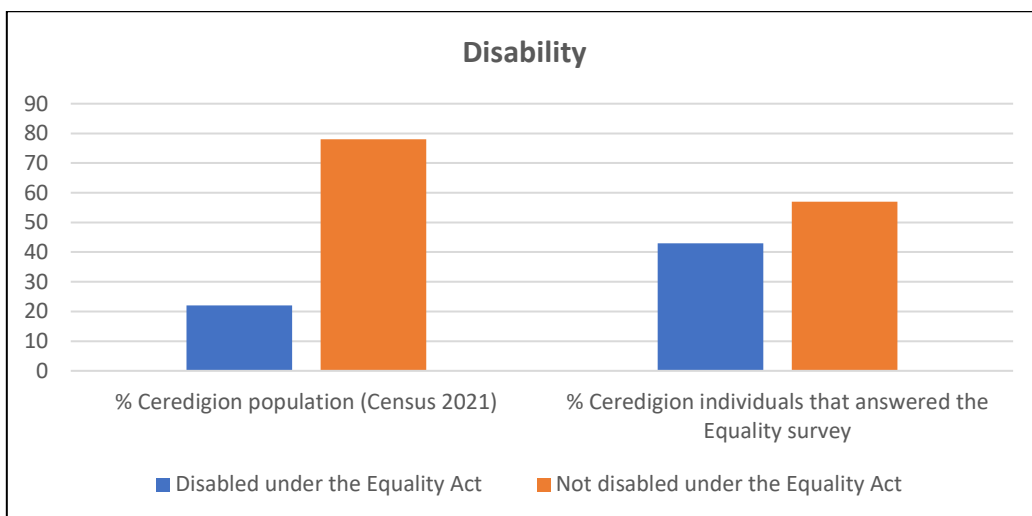


Fig 5.



Our regional equality survey asked people if they felt that specific groups of people had a worse or better experience in six areas of life than the population as a whole.

The specific groups were:

- Disabled people
- People from an ethnic minority
- Lesbian, gay or bisexual people
- People who are non-binary
- Trans-gender people
- Younger people (under 25 years)
- Older people (65 years or older)
- Females
- Males
- Single people
- People who are in a relationship
- Welsh speakers
- People who are pregnant or have recently given birth
- Members of the Armed Forces Community

The six areas of life were:

1. Education
2. Work and levels of pay
3. Living standards (access to care and support, housing, transport and leisure)
4. Health
5. Crime and access to justice
6. Participation (access to information, influencing decisions, getting on together in the community)

The table on the following page shows the top 3 cohorts that the people who answered our survey felt have a worse or much worse experience of the six areas of life.

The cohort that featured most frequently in the top three categories were:

- People who are disabled (14 times)
- People from an ethnic minority (11 times)
- Older people (6 times)
- Trans-gender people and People who are pregnant/recently given birth (4 times)
- Younger people (3 times),
- Lesbian, gay or bisexual people (twice)
- Females (once)

Six Areas of Life	Have a worse or much worse experience	
Education	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority
	3	Being pregnant/recently given birth
Work	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority and being an older person (65+)
	3	Being pregnant/recently given birth
Levels of Pay	1	Being a younger person (under 25)
	2	Being disabled
	3	Being female
Access to Care and Support	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority
	3	Being transgender
Housing	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority
	3	Being a younger person (under 25)
Access to Transport	1	Being disabled
	2	Being an older person (65+)
	3	Being pregnant/recently given birth
Leisure and access to the coast and countryside	1	Being disabled
	2	Being an older person (65+)
	3	Being pregnant/recently given birth
Health	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority
	3	Being an older person (65+)
Experience of Crime	1	Being from an ethnic minority
	2	Being disabled
	3	Being lesbian, gay or bisexual and being transgender
Access to Justice services	1	Being from an ethnic minority
	2	Being disabled
	3	Being transgender
Influencing decisions	1	Being from an ethnic minority
	2	Being disabled
	3	Being a younger person (under 25)
Access to information and digital services	1	Being an older person (65+)
	2	Being disabled
	3	Being from an ethnic minority
Getting on together in the community	1	Being disabled
	2	Being from an ethnic minority
	3	Being lesbian, gay or bisexual and being transgender
Quality of life since 2019	1	Being disabled
	2	Being an older person (65+)
	3	Being from an ethnic minority

3. Comments and lived experience

(All comments are taken from responses to the regional equality survey unless stated otherwise).

3.1 Education

As a bisexual girl I experienced bullying at school (long ago in a different region) which damaged my education. Since then, I have had to struggle to gain access to adult education to repair this damage. I now find that at age 64 I still face barriers to gaining the educational opportunities I seek.

There is disparity in the provision of education and resources to Welsh stream schools and departments, leaving those in underrepresented groups with less access to learning resources.

Although they are in a Welsh medium school, the children speak English with their friends – it's heart-breaking taking our children to a Welsh school for them to speak English.

Ceredigion favours those that are Welsh speaking. The education in secondary schools is of a higher standard if taught through the medium of Welsh than that of English.

There should be...Protection from bullying for trans and gay students and trans people...should be... included in teaching for Primary and Secondary. (Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)

Require schools to allow Pride clubs/other identity clubs. Not require them to have them, just to allow them. *(Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)*

Trans and queer friendly quality sex education in all schools. *(Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)*

Make school a better place and stop bullies. *(Children and Young People festival, 2023)*

Better home-schooling activities. *(Children and Young People festival, 2023)*

3.2 Work and Levels of Pay

I am African. I have applied for jobs and I have not been selected for the first stage, but the jobs are still available on advertisement platforms. Clearly racism is hugely playing a role.

For all public services to have more anti racist training, employ staff from diverse backgrounds, and know that black people can also be Welsh and belong.

Improve hiring processes for peoples of an ethnic minority, ensure that spaces are accessible for disabled people.

Better training. More diverse recruitment and appointments. Do senior officers in public services receive unconscious bias training courses?

People who can speak Welsh can get jobs more easily because it's a requirement on lots of jobs. They have less competition in interviews because there are less Welsh speakers to compete with. I've been unable to apply for jobs I'm otherwise well qualified to do simply because I'm not fluent in Welsh. I think this reduces diversity in the workplace because it's harder to learn Welsh unless you're already surrounded by Welsh speakers and fit with the Welsh in-crowd already, so it self-selects for a small proportion of the community.

You have to be willing to speak English to be able to get most jobs – and every job that I've been in – in Wales – people have made comments on my Welsh accent when I speak English.

Not all Welsh people can or want to speak Welsh, it's forced and discriminated against in employment and health care, it feels on the brink of racism. It should be a personal choice.

Ceredigion prioritises and supports those who are Welsh speaking in employment / earnings opportunities, especially those working within the council. There are very little opportunities for disabled people.

Work opportunities for disabled people is tokenistic and public bodies do not do enough to promote and recruit disabled people in employment beyond lower paid positions. In public services, there are additional barriers, such as the requirement to speak Welsh which indirectly discriminates against deaf people since there are no Welsh accessible courses for deaf people in the whole of Wales.

Better job prospects. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Better pay for Teaching Assistants. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Give employees a chance to evaluate their line managers anonymously; allow homeworking where at all possible, especially. for people with disabilities

3.3 Living Standards

These comments are about access to care and support, housing, transport, leisure and access to the coast and countryside.

Arrange regular transportation to access services, improve local services, improve access and affordable exercise clubs and support groups.

Work evenings and weekends/ bank holidays like others to get more accessible. Let's have staff back and visible in the community please so we can call in and see them! Stop relying on volunteers and goodwill, it's running out and abused!

Reintroduce day centres in the county to assist carers.

No childcare available for disabled children and teenagers either during term time or school holidays in Ceredigion. This is a long-term problem and has prevented me from returning to work in the healthcare sector. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

My son has multiple and complex needs and attends a resource base educational setting managed by the local authority. There is currently no after school provision in my local town and although we have been awarded direct payments to support him in attending after school enrichment activities, there are no Personal Assistants applying for the post. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

When caring for children with complex needs there is a lot of training hours involved to ensure that we can meet the needs of individual children, this is an additional cost for our staffing budget which is not considered within any funding support. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

Welsh medium childminders are booked up in advance (have a waiting list) and are very limited. It is important to us as a family to have a first language Welsh setting for our children as we are first language Welsh, many of the childminders are not fluent or confident in first language Welsh. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

You need better training on dealing with situations involving adults who have medical conditions and police officers need compassion when dealing with these.

One daughter and partner mid 30's couldn't find anywhere to live in Ceredigion and had to move to Pembrokeshire - only place they could find to live - managed to buy a house.

Generally, the housing situation appears to be horrific - rents are insane as are house prices and the quality of the housing stock inadequate and current grants for insulation using non breathable insulation on older unsuitable housing stock is likely to create severe future issues.

We know that women and LGBTQ+ people are far more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse including violence, emotional, sexual and financial abuse making them in greater need of housing services but also more likely to face discrimination from housing providers. My personal experience reflects this.

Most private landlords refuse disabled people because they don't want to pay for any adaptations. Disabled people are also more likely to need benefits, because being disabled is extremely expensive; and private landlords often illegally refuse to rent to people who have benefits.

We all love living in our own homes, but we need to explore what could communal living be like, a review is needed looking at shared community arrangements to reduce isolation and consider new developments that make it easier for people as they grow older. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

More affordable housing for first time buyers. (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

People of colour and LGBT+ people are at greater risk of hate crime in public places including on public transport. As a white woman in a relationship with a black woman I have experienced harassment on public transport in the past and this makes me wary to use public transport now if I can avoid it.

If I could get to workplaces on Sundays, I would be living the dream instead of getting one hour of sleep a night from job search stress, no one wants someone who can't do Sundays.

Very limited spaces for disabled passengers on buses and limited number of accessible taxis. Older people rely on buses which have been cut and communication is terrible about changes.

Coastal footpath and beach access in Ceredigion not accessible for disabled or those with Health issues - very narrow and falling away from the cliff in quite a few places and disabled access to beaches needed with regular public transport to such beaches.

Beach buggy to gain access on beach (*Older people engagement 2022/2023*)

Lack of pavements for mobility scooters and mobility issues (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I can't access our coastal path because it's not disabled friendly. I would love to access the countryside but most of that isn't disabled friendly either. I would love to see wider earth paths to be able to accommodate a rollator or wheelchair, not tarmac paths as they would spoil it.

Disabled almost everything has steps. Going to use the example of the leisure centre though. Disabled changing rooms from swimming, or other parts leisure centre, often get taken over by families. Or blocked off by staff because they haven't been cleaned alongside the normal changing rooms.

Trans people often can't access changing rooms because they don't feel safe in the main ones. My friends have been harassed. We need more family changing, and private changing, so we don't get the cross over with disabled changing.

Continence management is a big worry, there should be adult and child changing facilities, how much has been made by changing the loos to paid loos?" (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

Let trans people pee in peace. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

As a transgender man, I worry every day about my human rights. It's only a matter of time before I will not be allowed to use a male public toilet.

More clubs for 4-year-olds. (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

14+ clubs for young people (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

There seems to be very little for over 10's to early 20's in rural areas. My daughter wants to move to my village with my grandchildren who are under 5 - great now but without a car or public transport, it will be dire in a few years' time.

3.4 Health

Very rural area and Bronglais hospital is on a hill and lacks parking - difficult to accompany a disabled person to appts there. Have dropped at old entrance and had to find parking and then run uphill and take the person to their appt.

As a bisexual woman in a lesbian relationship, I have been denied adequate psychosexual counselling compared to heterosexual counterparts surviving similar breast cancer treatment.

Due to my autism, the doctors dismiss me and don't listen, so I don't bother going.

Travel is difficult when you're disabled, and our trust is over 3 counties. Trans health care is only done by 3 clinics that are in England. 2 of these are in London and have 5 year long waits.

Better mental and physical healthcare for people in the LGBTQ+ community
(*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

3.5 Crime and Access to Justice

I get over policed a lot, as do my friends, and neighbours. Mostly this is because I'm poor and live in a poor area. This has happened before for being out at night in my wheelchair, being told to move along for just being out. Another time I was moved on by 3 officers for using a bench while having an asthma attack, because I was scaring people.

People of colour I know get stop constantly for silly reasons. Just for walking around.

Aberystwyth is peaceful with plenty of fresh air and a low crime rate. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I want every member of the LGBT+ community to feel safe and accepted.
(*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Stop propagating transphobic jokes, criticism, discrimination, violence etc and come to see the normality of trans individuals (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Aberaeron would be better if you get rid of vapes and drugs. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Safe spaces for LGBTQ+ people and other minorities. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Racism and disability hate issues are rife. Sexism is rife and it's hard to feel safe.

3.6 Influencing decisions

Things are increasingly online and there can be a digital divide which, arguably adversely affects older people.

I don't believe that Welsh language is treated fairly and equally e.g. community councils lack translation facilities.

Not outward looking, very narrow/single minded - managers make decisions they want but cover it by a 'consultation'.

As a Pagan, I often find that if I mention my beliefs, I am not taken seriously in public discussions. I don't feel safe to share my religious opinions outside of closed circles.

I resent the notion, widespread in Ceredigion, that because we have relatively small ethnic minority populations, we don't need to consider the needs or rights of people of colour to participate in public life and influence decisions.

Women's voices are still often not heard, and women are woefully underrepresented at County Council and community council level.

It all depends on what the decision is about. Parents of young disabled people are very forthright as they have always had to shout.

Most decision-making systems are run by older people and participated in by older people, so it can be quite an exclusive environment. I'm thinking of town councils, etc

Men could resign or stand down in favour of women candidates. Or take more responsibility for childcare, eldercare and housework to free up women to participate in public life.

In my experience women are often ignored when they have an opinion.

Involve the communities you serve in a sincere way and not just via complicated consultations which exclude many (particularly lower socio-economic groups) from participating in debates on decisions that may impact their lives.

No one listens anyway, only Welsh speakers and those with council connections have a true say and influence.

There seems to be very little understanding of the relationship between democracy and Community involvement in the County Council. The opportunity to have any real influence or even dialogue is sadly extremely minimal.

Consultation meetings, etc are nearly always inaccessible to deaf people. Thus, if you can't attend, you don't get to influence.

3.7 Access to Information and Digital Services

My wife used to teach IT within the community. Her classes had an age range from 17 to 92. She had people from all of the groups listed. So, all of those who wanted it had the same access to it.

Accessibility isn't always built into online systems, and this can pose challenges for various disabilities.

I know people who don't have the internet at all, and I find they are quite excluded from a lot of information because we tend to presume that everyone has a smartphone and access to a computer.

Old people can afford the technology but can't use it.

A lot of things are now digital, and a lot of elderly don't have access to computers or the Internet.

Please don't forget that not everyone is online. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Wider promotion of events. Some are still unaware of the fantastic community that there is. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Elderly and disabled are forgotten about and are not included in digital upgrading. Impractical suggestions made and they feel left behind and excluded. It's harder for them.

It depends on the person. Many people I work with have no interest, so opportunity is irrelevant.

Welsh language service is generally lower.

3.8 Getting on together in the community

Getting together in a community is difficult in my village as there are different groups or residents who try to organise things who seem to belittle others - so I tend to avoid them and keep to myself.

I'm very lucky to live in a lovely, friendly village.

I can't easily join in, so I am mostly alone.

Mae siarad yr un iaith yn dod â ni'n agosach at ein gilydd, mae'n druenus iawn fod llai ohonom bellach yn fy nghymuned. (*Speaking the same language brings us closer together, it's a great shame that there are now fewer of us in my community*).

Worse being a non- Welsh speaker.

Some protected characteristics are all fashionable now and lots of media/ opportunities open for them. Disability and old age is never popular and they get left behind and overlooked.

The community things that go on are usually weekday work times so not available for anyone working or carers. More effort should be made to meet everyone's needs and not to fit in with council employee needs.

People tend to mind their own business and let you get on with it but help each other when its needed (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

People tend to show a lot of consideration to older people in this area. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I want every member of the LGBT+ community to feel safe and accepted. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

I'd like people to stop yelling slurs at me in the pubs. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

I would love a world where people ask pronouns before assuming. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

*I wish...*For people to not feel ashamed or scared to live as their authentic self. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

3.9 Impact of events since the last equality survey in 2019

People were asked to consider the impact of Covid-19, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis.

Covid was great for caring for a relative - gave the space needed at a time when something was about to break. Also good for my pregnant daughter - gave time and space for both parents to be there. My mother in her 80's in England found isolation during Covid very difficult.

I think young people are really struggling with the interpersonal impacts of being locked-in during covid and rising prices making it harder to get started and make a life.

Being an introvert, I actually benefitted from lockdowns as was finally allowed to work from home - sadly this didn't last, despite how positively it affects my mental health; all is overshadowed by the financial impact of inflation without wage compensation and due to the housing situation in Wales I'm forced to live in a house share with 12 others as it's affordable (I'm miserable).

I would say that those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, non-binary or transgender, are more accepted now than they used to be.

Cost associated with living with disability has soared and no one recognises that.

Cash is still legal, make sure we can control our own budget. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Everyone who isn't rich has been hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

I want to celebrate my next -14th - birthday with my father and grandparents in my Ukrainian house. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

I want to go back to Ukraine (*Children and Young People festival 2023*)

4. Conclusion

All of the above has been considered as part of the engagement and consultation process that has helped us to formulate our draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

The draft Strategic Equality Plan will now be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in October 2023.

If approved, the Equalities and Inclusion team will put the draft plan out to public consultation in Winter 2023. Once the public consultation is concluded and any required amendments are made, the final plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in February 2024.

The new Strategic Equality plan 2024-28 is scheduled to be published on our website by 1st April 2024.



This **Integrated Impact Assessment tool** incorporates the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Sustainable Development Principles, the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011 (Welsh Language Standards requirements) and Risk Management in order to inform effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS:

Proposal Title	Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028
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Service Area	Policy, Performance and Public Protection	Corporate Lead Officer	Alun Williams	Strategic Director	Barry Rees
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Name of Officer completing the IIA	Cathryn Morgan	E-mail	Cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk	Phone no	07807 845565
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Please give a brief description of the purpose of the proposal

The Specific Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales require us to set out our Equality Objectives and then review every four years. This is our fourth Strategic Equality Plan. The revised objectives for 2024-28 and accompanying action plan must be published by 31st of March 2024.

We have reviewed our Equality Objectives in light of engagement and research into the current state of equality in Ceredigion. Our conclusion is that our objectives are still fit for purpose but, due to the changing nature of society and the work we have undertaken up to now, we need to amend the actions we will take to achieve the objectives. Our Equality Objectives are:

1. To be an Exemplar Equal Opportunities Employer
2. To Foster Good Relations and Tackle Prejudice
3. To ensure Engagement and Participation
4. To ensure Dignity, Respect and Access to Services
5. To provide Fair and Inclusive Education

Who will be directly affected by this proposal?

People who live in, work in, study in and visit Ceredigion, including the Council Workforce. There is a particular focus on people who share one or more of the characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Cyngor Sir Ceredigion County Council - Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

An integrated tool to inform effective decision making



VERSION CONTROL: The IIA should be used at the earliest stages of decision making, and then honed and refined throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable development, Welsh language and equality considerations wherever possible.

Author	Decision making stage	Version number	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
Cathryn Morgan	Scrutiny committee	1	21/08/2023	
Cathryn Morgan	Cabinet	2	12/09/2023	No changes

COUNCIL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: Which of the Council's Strategic Objectives does the proposal address and how?

Boosting the Economy, supporting Business and enabling employment.	Equality Objective 1 describes the steps we will take to encourage a more diverse workforce and enable employment.
Creating caring and healthy Communities.	<p>Equality Objective 1 includes an action to develop and deliver a range of cultural awareness and equalities training.</p> <p>Equality Objective 2 describes the steps we will take to foster good relations and tackle prejudice.</p> <p>Equality Objective 3 describes the steps we will take to ensure engagement and participation. This will improve our understanding of our diverse population and how best we can meet their needs, where practicably and reasonably possible.</p> <p>Equality Objective 4 describes the steps we will take to ensure dignity, respect and access to services. This will help us to offer inclusive and accessible care and support services.</p> <p>Equality Objective 5 includes actions to support trans gender pupils and to address bullying in schools.</p>
Providing the best start in life and enabling Learning at all ages.	Equality Objective 5 describes the steps we will take to provide a fair and inclusive education.
Creatin sustainable, greener and well-connected Communities.	Equality Objective 4 reflects the need for more affordable and appropriate housing and for sustainable and affordable travel solutions.



2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES: How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the five sustainable development principles, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, in its development?			
Sustainable Development Principle	Does the proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not, explain why.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the principle?
Long Term Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future.	This is a four year plan which builds on previous plans. Long-standing equality issues can be carried from one four year plan to the next. This enables us to address longer term needs and plan for the future.	Our gradual progress towards achieving a more equal Ceredigion can be seen by comparing the annual reports published on our Equalities web page.	Continue to use previous plans as one of our evidence sources when revising plans for the next cycle.
Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver.	There are many opportunities to collaborate with others in order to deliver the plan. For example, the new graduate scheme will require collaboration with Universities; we will work with Victim Support to achieve the Hate Crime Trustmark and we will work with the Regional Community Cohesion team on a range of actions.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views.	<p>A regional engagement campaign was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the state of equality in the Dyfed Powys area. The responses contributed to the Development of this draft Plan.</p> <p>The draft Plan will go out to public consultation again in winter 2023 before it is formally approved.</p> <p>The Equality plan itself includes actions to do more with groups of stakeholders from specified minority groups and to improve the way that we feedback to those who have participated in our Engagement and consultation campaigns.</p>	<p>The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023.</p> <p>The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p>	

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<p>Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse.</p>	<p>The plan has been developed as a result of our engagement and research into the current state of equality in Ceredigion. The aim of the plan is to coordinate our resources to identify and address the root causes of inequality.</p>	<p>The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023.</p> <p>The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p>	
<p>Integration Positively impacting on people, economy, environment and culture and trying to benefit all three.</p>	<p>The Equalities working group includes representatives from a range of Council Services. This helps us to consider interdependencies and possible tensions between services.</p> <p>The draft Equalities plan will be discussed at Leadership group meeting so that all CLO's are able to identify further impacts should they exist.</p>	<p>Minutes of meetings of the Strategic Equalities working group.</p>	

3. WELL-BEING GOALS: Does your proposal deliver any of the seven National Well-being Goals for Wales as outlined on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?

Well-being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts-	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?
<p>3.1. A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs.</p>	<p>We anticipate that successful delivery of this plan will contribute to a prosperous Wales. For example:</p> <p>Increased number of people attending cultural awareness and equality training.</p> <p>Graduate scheme, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>Working with stakeholders to identify examples of good practice.</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p> <p>Research undertaken by Welsh Government to inform their Anti-racist Wales plan.</p>	

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	Improve educational outcomes for children with additional learning needs.		
3.2. A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change).	The Strategic Equality Plan does not contribute directly to a resilient Wales. However, by fostering good relations and building community cohesion, communities will have greater connectivity and potentially greater resilience.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
3.3. A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised and health impacts are understood.	We anticipate that successful delivery of this plan will contribute to a healthier Wales. For example: A well trained workforce is well placed to provide culturally aware support. Inclusive play and physical activity opportunities improve physical and mental wellbeing of those who are able to attend. We will establish an Integrated model of community care and housing in Tregaron.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
3.4. A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected.	A significant part of the plan is to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by building community cohesion and tackling prejudice. We will work with stakeholder groups to help us to achieve this.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	

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<p>3.5. A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental well-being.</p>	<p>The Strategic Equality Plan does not directly contribute to a globally responsible Wales.</p> <p>However, by fostering good relations and building community cohesion, communities will have greater connectivity and potentially greater understanding of global citizenship.</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.</p>	
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<p>3.6. A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.</p>				<p>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.</p>	<p>What evidence do you have to support this view?</p>	<p>What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>Age Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their age? (Please tick ✓)</p>						
<p>Children and Young People up to 18</p>	<p>Positive ✓</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>None/ Negligible</p>	<p>The plan responds to needs expressed by young people to have better job prospects, to be treated with respect and to address bullying in schools.</p>	<p>The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023.</p>	
<p>People 18-50</p>	<p>Positive ✓</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>None/ Negligible</p>			
<p>Older People 50+</p>	<p>Positive ✓</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>None/ Negligible</p>	<p>It responds to needs expressed by, or on behalf of, older</p>		

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				people to address the digital divide and housing and transport matters. Much of this will be supported by the work we will do to join the Age Friendly network.		
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Disability Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their disability? (Please tick ✓)				The plan includes actions to increase diversity in the workplace and to increase representation of disabled people in local politics and decision making. There are also actions to provide inclusive and specialised play, physical activity and childcare opportunities for disabled children and young people. We will consider the needs of disabled people when maintaining footways and carriageways and when we review our Toilet Strategy. We will improve the methods we use to communicate with the public, this includes the provision of large print, Easy Read and plain text versions of documents.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
Hearing Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Physical Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Visual Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Learning Disability	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Long Standing Illness	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Mental Health	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Other	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			

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Transgender Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on transgender people? (Please tick ✓)				The plan responds to Welsh Government's LGBTQ+ action plan and needs expressed by our local trans community. For example, we will adopt and implement Welsh Government's national trans guidance, we will review our Toilet Strategy and we will establish a LGBTQ+ stakeholder forum so that we can better understand examples of good practice.	The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023. The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28	
Transgender	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Marriage or Civil Partnership Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on marriage or Civil partnership? (Please tick ✓)				The impact of the Equality plan on this cohort will be negligible. Work has been undertaken in previous plans to ensure equality for people who are married or in a civil partnership.	Previous Strategic Equality annual reports	
Marriage	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Civil partnership	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Pregnancy or Maternity Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on pregnancy or maternity? (Please tick ✓)				The impact of the Equality plan on this cohort will be negligible. Work has been undertaken in previous plans to ensure equality for people	Previous Strategic Equality annual reports	
Pregnancy	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			

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			✓	who are pregnant or have recently given birth.		
Maternity	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	The review of our Toilet Strategy is likely to have a positive impact.		
			✓			

Race Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on race? (Please tick ✓)				The plan responds to Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales action plan and the needs expressed by local people who have various ethnic backgrounds.	The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023.	
White	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓	The plan includes a range of actions to raise cultural awareness. For example, we will work towards increasing diversity in the workplace representation of BAME people in local politics and decision making.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28	
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓			We will take action against Hate Crime and we will deliver a media campaign to celebrate diversity and commemorate relevant historical events.		
Asian / Asian British	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓			We will take action against Hate Crime and we will deliver a media campaign to celebrate diversity and commemorate relevant historical events.		
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Other Ethnic Groups	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					

Religion or non-beliefs Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different religions, beliefs or non-beliefs? (Please tick ✓)				It's unlikely that that plan will have a significant negative or positive impact on people	It is noted that the Ceredigion population (according to the 2021 Census) includes	
Christian	Positive	Negative	None/			

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			Negligible ✓	<p>because of their belief or non-belief.</p> <p>There are actions to increase diversity in the workplace and in local politics and decision making; this may have an unintended positive impact on some people with the religions and beliefs listed.</p> <p>There are also actions designed to increase understanding and community cohesion between people from different backgrounds and these may also have an unintended positive impact.</p>	<p>people with the following religions and beliefs:</p> <p>378 - Buddhist</p> <p>158 - Hindu</p> <p>75 - Jewish</p> <p>515 - Muslim</p> <p>35 - Sikh</p> <p>677 - 'other' religion</p> <p>33,409 people said that they are Christian.</p> <p>30,749 people said that they have no religion.</p> <p>5,480 people did not answer this question in the Census.</p> <p>Most of the respondents to our engagement campaign (43%) said that they have no religion. 34% said that they are Christian. 10% said that they are Atheist. 8% preferred not to say and 5% selected 'other'</p>	
Buddhist	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Hindu	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Humanist	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Jewish	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Muslim	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Sikh	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Non-belief	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
Other	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible ✓			
<p>Sex Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on men and/or women? (Please tick ✓)</p>				<p>There are currently more women in lower paid jobs and more men in higher paid jobs in the Council. We want to</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28</p>	
Men	Positive	Negative	None/			

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			Negligible	achieve a more even mix of men and women in lower and higher grade jobs. This will have a negative effect on men and a positive one on women.	Annual gender pay gap reports.	
		✓				
Women	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	We want to increase representation of women in local politics, this will also have a negative impact on men.		
	✓					
Sexual Orientation Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different sexual orientation? (Please tick ✓)				The plan responds to Welsh Government's LGBTQ+ action plan and the needs expressed by local LGBTQ+ people.	The analysis report of the Engagement campaign for Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023.	
Bisexual	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓			The plan includes a range of actions that will have a positive impact on LGBTQ+ people. For example, removing personal pronouns in our recruitment literature, addressing Hate Crime and developing a LGBTQ+ stakeholder group	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
Gay Men	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Gay Women / Lesbian	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
	✓					
Heterosexual / Straight	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			



Having due regards in relation to the three aims of the Equality Duty - determine whether the proposal will assist or inhibit your ability to eliminate discrimination; advance equality and foster good relations.

3.6.2. How could/does the proposal help advance/promote equality of opportunity?

The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 is designed to address inequalities, to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and to encourage their increased participation. Annual progress reports will be presented to Scrutiny committee and Cabinet to ensure that we meet our aim and objectives.

3.6.3. How could/does the proposal/decision help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation?

The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 is designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Annual progress reports will be presented to Scrutiny committee and Cabinet to ensure that we meet our aim and objectives.

3.6.4. How could/does the proposal impact on advancing/promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 is designed to advance good relations and improve community cohesion. Annual progress reports will be presented to Scrutiny committee and Cabinet to ensure that we meet our aim and objectives.

Having due regard of the Socio-Economic Duty of the Equality Act 2010. Socio-Economic Disadvantage is living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in the same society.

3.6.5 What evidence do you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to the proposal?
Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.

We know that people who are disabled and Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are more likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage and inequality of outcome than other sectors of the population. Women and LGBTQ+ people can face bullying, domestic abuse and other experiences that can result in socio-economic disadvantage. The plan aims to address this inequality by taking positive action.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales action plan and LGBTQ+ action plan. Comments from our Regional Engagement campaign (see separate report).

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What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?						
We will deliver the Strategic Equality plan 2024-28.						
3.7. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh Language are promoted and protected.				Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Will the proposal be delivered bilingually (Welsh & English)?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	The plan and annual reports will be published in Welsh and in English. Council services are delivered bilingually. Our corporate Equality workgroup meetings are held bilingually with simultaneous translation.	The draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.	
	✓					
Will the proposal have an effect on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	The plan includes actions to promote our work Welsh development opportunities, to ensure that service users are able to access services in the Welsh language and to implement our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-32.	As above	
	✓					
Will the proposal increase or reduce the	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	As above	As above	

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opportunity for persons to access services through the medium of Welsh?	✓					
How will the proposal treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	The plan and annual reports will be published in Welsh and in English. Council services are delivered bilingually. Our corporate Equality workgroup meetings are held bilingually with simultaneous translation.	As above	
Will it preserve promote and enhance local culture and heritage?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	The services that will be provided will be promoted bilingually, in line with our Welsh Language Policy Statement. Work Welsh development opportunities and the Welsh in Education Plan 2022-32 will help the promotion of the Welsh language. The plan will increase opportunities for disabled children and young people to take part in sport, art and recreation activities.	As above	



				We hope that our local culture and heritage will be enhanced by ensuring that relevant collections celebrate diversity.		
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4. STRENGTHENING THE PROPOSAL: If the proposal is likely to have a negative impact on any of the above (including any of the protected characteristics), what practical changes/actions could help reduce or remove any negative impacts as identified in sections 2 and 3?

4.1 Actions.

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?	Progress
We will deliver the Strategic Equality plan 2024-28	March 2024 - April 2028	Ceredigion County Council	

4.2. If no action is to be taken to remove or mitigate negative impacts please justify why.

(Please remember that if you have identified unlawful discrimination, immediate and potential, as a result of this proposal, the proposal must be changed or revised).

The one negative impact that has been identified is that on men, if we achieve our aim to have a more equal balance of men and women in the workforce and in local politics. This negative impact must be accepted if we are to achieve improved gender equality.

4.3. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing.

How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

The Corporate Equalities Workgroup will meet three times each year to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the plan. Annual monitoring reports will be submitted to Scrutiny and Cabinet and published on our website.

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5. RISK: What is the risk associated with this proposal?					
Impact Criteria	1 - Very low	2 - Low	3 - Medium	4 - High	5 - Very High
Likelihood Criteria	1 - Unlikely to occur	2 - Lower than average chance of occurrence	3 - Even chance of occurrence	4 - Higher than average chance of occurrence	5 - Expected to occur
Risk Description	Impact (severity)		Probability (deliverability)		Risk Score
Failure to comply with the Equality Act	5		1		5
Does your proposal have a potential impact on another Service area?					
Equality is a cross-cutting theme across all council services. The Strategic Equality plan has a positive impact on service areas in terms of strategically mainstreaming and delivering on our Equality Duty.					

6. SIGN OFF			
Position	Name	Signature	Date
Service Manager	Diana Davies		
Corporate Lead Officer	Alun Williams		
Strategic Director	Barry Rees		
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Catrin M S Davies		

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 3 October 2023

Title: Recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to the draft Ceredigion Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28

Purpose of the report: To provide feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 11 September 2023

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee considered the draft Ceredigion Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28, at its meeting on 11th September 2023.

The Committee heard that Ceredigion County Council is a specified public body under the Equality Act 2010. The Specific Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales require us to set out our Equality Objectives and then review every four years. The revised objectives for 2024-28 and accompanying action plan must be published by 31st of March 2024.

Following discussion, Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet endorse the Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 before it goes out to public consultation over winter 2023.

Councillor Keith Evans
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee