



Corporate Equalities Plan

2009-2012

Language Signpost

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ถ้าท่านต้องการรายละเอียดเพิ่มเติม โปรดถามผู้ที่ท่านรู้จักที่พูดภาษาอังกฤษหรือภาษาเวลช์ได้ เพื่อโทรศัพท์หมายเลข 01824 706146

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Foreword

Equality is not just about meeting a legal obligation; it is also about fairness and good sense, and a moral duty to challenge discrimination. The purpose of the Corporate Equalities Plan is to make a commitment to take the needs of everyone into account in everything we do, whether that's providing services, employing people, developing policies, communicating or consulting.

Our Corporate Equalities Plan outlines the challenges ahead in providing continuous improvement, promoting inclusion and equal opportunities in our services and for our employees. It sets out the key objectives we are focussing on for the next three years, how we will deliver them and how we will measure our success.

The Council will continue to challenge the way it provides services, develops policies and employs people. We have made progress in a number of areas but recognise that there is much more to do and we are committed to continually improving and developing our approach to Equality and Diversity.

The Council is committed to ensuring no one is discriminated against, either directly by the Council or indirectly, because of their age, disability, gender, black and ethnic origin, marital status, nationality, preferred language, religion, belief, or political beliefs sexual orientation.

In our Vision we say:

**“We will celebrate and respect the diversity
of our county”**

From the feedback we have received we believe that our priorities reflect the most persistent inequalities our community currently faces. Our Action Plan identifies the practical steps we need to take to improve our performance on equal opportunities. We will endeavour to make equality a regular part of the mainstream policy process by ensuring that equality issues are integrated into the services we deliver to the public and our employees.

We hope you agree that the new Equality Plan continues to develop the work we have already undertaken and demonstrates our commitment to be a fair and caring Council.



Dr Mohammed Mehmet
Chief Executive

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Section 1 What does the Corporate Equalities Plan include?

The aim of our Corporate Equality Plan is to provide a clear approach to equality and diversity across all equality groups, including age, disability, gender, religion and belief, race and sexual orientation, and to minimise duplication. The Equality Plan includes our Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes and the Equality Act 2006 covering age, sexual orientation and religion and belief. An equality action plan sets out how we will deliver our commitments to all equality groups.

In revising the Plan, we recognise that the specific requirements of each duty need to be addressed in a structured way. In order to address the varying review dates of the existing equality schemes, the Equality Plan will run from 2009 until 2012 and will be reviewed and up-dated in accordance with the requirements of the Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes.

We have developed a single action plan which addresses all equality groups. The action plan which is a 'live' document and therefore subject to review, sets out how we will implement equality and diversity. It brings together the work which is currently being done across the Council, together with setting out priority areas where further work needs to be done.

Definition:

EQUALITY: Creating a fair society in which everyone can participate and is given the opportunity to achieve

DIVERSITY: Recognising and valuing differences between individuals or communities to create a positive and inclusive culture

i) Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Under the Race Relations (Amended) Act 2000, we are required to produce a Race Equality Scheme and review it every three years.

The aim is to ensure that public authorities offer accessible services, which meet the needs of the community and offer equal opportunities in their employment duties. The Act strengthens the Race Relations Act (1976) by placing a statutory duty on public authorities to promote race equality

ii) Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 was introduced in order to improve opportunities for disabled people. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, public authorities are required to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and review it every three years.

Central Government has set out its vision for disability equality as follows, ‘ By 2025, disabled persons in Britain, should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society’.

iii) Gender Equality Duty

The Gender Equality Duty [GED] is a legal obligation which came into force in April 2007. It was introduced by the Equality Act 2006, which in turn amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. (section 10)

iv) Equality Act 2006

The Equality Act 2006 covering age, sexual orientation and religion or belief and other relevant legislation. Although the legislative requirements in these areas are more limited, we will implement this Scheme inclusively where practical.

In April 2009 The Equality Bill was passed, the Bill plans to bring legislation together and ensure it is clear, consistent, transparent, understandable and easier for people to use.

v) Human Rights 1998

The fundamental principles of human rights are at the very core of service delivery. Everyone has a right to be safe and protected from harm, to be treated fairly and with dignity, to live the life of choice, and to take an active part in the community and wider society. As a public body we need to ensure that everybody has equal access to our services and the right to be treated fairly. The right to equal services, opportunities and fair treatment is a basic human right.

Human rights work in practical and straightforward ways, bringing common sense into situations where bureaucratic procedures and systems lose sight of people and their individual needs.

Did you know? 2008 celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights!

Denbighshire County Council has a separate Welsh Language Scheme and is not included in this Corporate Equality Plan. In Denbighshire over a quarter of the population aged 3 and above can speak Welsh compared to around one fifth in Wales as a whole. The Welsh Language Board regularly monitors our Welsh Language Scheme and Action Plan. Further details are available on our website.

Section 2 What do we know about the people who live in Denbighshire?

Population

At the time of the 2001 Census, the population of Denbighshire was around 93,000 people, and the area was less densely populated than Wales as a whole. The size of the population rose by over 6% between 1993 and 2003 compared with a rise of nearly 2% in Wales and mid year estimates put Denbighshire's population now as over 95,990.

The following data has been taken from the 2001 Census and used to produce an indicative profile of the equality strands. The Census information is unlikely to include Gypsies and travellers, refugees or asylum seekers.

Table 1 The population statistics of Denbighshire (Census 2001).

Demographics		Ethnicity	
Population	93,065	% of the Population	
Males	44,544	White or White British	98.9%
Females	48,521	Mixed Race	0.5%
Aged 0 to 15	19.7%	Asian or Asian British	0.3%
Aged 16 to 64	60.1%	Black or Black British	0.1%
Aged 65 and over	20.2%	Other ethnic groups	0.3%

Disability

It is difficult to get an exact idea of how many disabled people there are in the UK. Surveys tend to word the 'disability question' in different ways which could lead to people feeling that they fit one criteria but not another. The Disability Rights Commission established that approximately 1 in 7 people in Britain are disabled and the number in the coastal area of North Wales is considerably higher at 1 in 4.

The 2001 Census indicates a total of 21,751 people (or 23.4%) in Denbighshire with a limiting long term illness. This is defined as a long term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do.

General Statistics

There are now an estimated 11 million disabled adults in the United Kingdom (1 in 5 of the total adult population) and 770,000 disabled children. Recent creditable statistics that relate to disabled people reveal that inequality still exists for disabled people:

Within Wales figures contained in 'A Statistical Focus on Disability and Long-term Illness' published by the National Assembly for Wales in 2003 paints a picture that shows a steady increase in the numbers of disabled people over the past twenty years and the effect that disability and long-term illness have on people's standard of living.

Gender

In 2001, the current population figures for Denbighshire show a breakdown of 48% male and 52% female (Census 2001).

There are 30 million women and 28 million men in the UK. 46% of the workforce are women, but only 10% of senior management positions are held by women. (source: 2001 Census)

Race

In 2001, 99% of the population was white or white British, with 0.5% from mixed race, 0.3% Asian or Asian British, 0.1% Black or Black British and 0.3% from other ethnic groups. Although accurate information is not yet available Denbighshire also has some evidence of an increasing number of people living in the County from Eastern Europe.

Latest statistics from the Institute of Public Policy Research has revealed that Denbighshire has 430 migrant workers.

International Migration

The Office For National Statistics produced the mid-2002 to mid-2006 international migration estimates using the Labour Force Survey (LFS) along with data from the International Passenger Survey (IPS). This was combined with Home Office data on asylum seekers and their dependents, visitor switchers and with estimates of migration between the Republic of Ireland and Wales from the Irish Labour Force Survey. This methodology enabled ONS to provide better estimates than previously used of where migrants go within the country.

The IPS is an ONS survey of passengers arriving at and departing from the main UK air and seaports and the Channel tunnel. At present the only reliable source of information on emigration is the IPS.

The table below shows that the total average international migration for Denbighshire over the period 2002/03 to 2005/06 was zero due to the average number of immigrants being the same as the average number who emigrated.

(source:ONS mid year population estimates).

Table 2

Year	No. In Migrants	No. Out Migrants	Net Migrants
2002-03	200	150	50
2003-04	200	150	50
2004-05	150	300	-150
2005-06	200	150	50
2006-07	350	200	150
2007-08	350	300	50

Note: Data Rounded to nearest 50

As the figures give a cumulative total of those arriving but provide no information about departures they cannot be used as migration statistics as they only give a partial view.

Table 3 Number of registered workers, May 2004-June 2007 (Denbighshire)

Period	Number
May04 - March06	190
Apr06 - June06	55
June06 - Sept06	55
Oct06 - Dec06	40
Jan07 - March07	40
Apr07 - June07	15
Cumulative total	395

The latest information suggests a slowdown or flattening off of the number of applicants. Polish nationals account for 60% of applications within Denbighshire.

For 2006/07, 460 NI numbers were allocated to foreign nationals living in Denbighshire of which 41% were to Polish nationals and 35% were to nationals from non-eastern European countries. This compares to 500 in 2005/06.

Migrant Workers

Denbighshire is in a similar position to most other Welsh Authorities in not knowing the number of migrant workers in the County and unclear as to their intentions in terms of staying for a relative short period or settling in the area indefinitely.

Denbighshire has participated in an analysis of its services to migrant workers in conjunction with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership who are tasked in identifying who is responding to migrant workers issues and how the work can be coordinated effectively.

Denbighshire total number of migrants who registered on the Worker Registration Scheme between May 2004 and Dec 2007 = 430

Age

It is estimated that by 2010, almost 40% of the workforce in the UK will be aged 45 or over and 16 – 24 year olds will make up only 17% of the workforce. (source 2001 Census)

In 2001, 60% of people living in Denbighshire were aged between 16 and 64, 20% were under 15 and 20% were aged over 65. However more recent information shows that compared to the population of Wales as a whole, the age profile of Denbighshire is older: 23% are of retirement age or over compared to 20% nationally.

- For all age bands over 24 years there are more females than males in the County.
- The relatively low number of people in the County aged 20-29 is due to the fall in the fertility rate in the 1970s and because there is no University establishment in the County.
- The peak in the age bands 40-44 and 55-59 reflects the effects of the post Second World War and 1960s baby booms.

- People aged 60 and over form a larger proportion of the population of the County than young people under the age of 20 (26,750 or 27.6% compared with 22,600 or 23.3%).
- There are 3,000 people aged 85 and over in the County (3.1% of the total population).

Table 4. Age breakdown of the County's population in 2007

Age Range	Females		Males		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	2,350	4.7	2,600	5.5	4,950	5.1
5-9	2,650	5.3	2,800	6.0	5,450	5.6
10-14	3,000	6.0	2,950	6.3	5,950	6.1
15-19	3,000	6.0	3,250	6.9	6,300	6.5
20-24	2,400	4.8	2,750	5.9	5,100	5.3
25-29	2,300	4.6	2,250	4.8	4,600	4.7
30-34	2,450	4.9	2,350	5.0	4,800	4.9
35-39	3,300	6.6	3,000	6.4	6,250	6.4
40-44	3,600	7.2	3,350	7.2	7,000	7.2
45-49	3,350	6.7	3,150	6.7	6,550	6.8
50-54	3,250	6.5	2,950	6.3	6,200	6.4
55-59	3,600	7.2	3,550	7.6	7,150	7.4
60-64	3,450	6.9	3,300	7.0	6,750	7.0
65-69	2,850	5.7	2,750	5.9	5,600	5.8
70-74	2,400	4.8	2,150	4.6	4,600	4.7
75-79	2,150	4.3	1,650	3.5	3,800	3.9
80-84	1,950	3.9	1,100	2.3	3,050	3.1
85-89	1,350	2.7	650	1.4	1,950	2.0
90 & over	750	1.5	300	0.6	1,050	1.1
Total	50,100		46,850		97,000	
0-20	11,000	22.0	11,650	24.9	22,600	23.3
60+	14,850	29.6	11,900	25.4	26,750	27.6
85+	2,100	4.2	900	1.9	3,000	3.1

Religion

In 2001, of all people in Denbighshire, Christianity was identified as the dominant religion accounting for 78% of the population. The next most dominant at 13% was identified as no religion and 8% as religion not stated. The remainder of the Denbighshire population account for a variety of religious beliefs, where 0.2% Buddhists, 0.13% Hindu, 0.07% Jewish, 0.26% Muslim, 0.02% Sikh and 0.17% any other religion.

Sexual Orientation

Statistics on sexual orientation were not included in the 2001 Census. The UK Government have used a guide estimate of between 5 – 7% of the adult population when preparing for the Civil Partnership Regulations. We are committed to dispel any prejudice which may exist towards gay and lesbian individuals both as an employer and as a provider of services. The Council employee data does however provided limited information and we collect information in relation to Civil Ceremonies held in Denbighshire.

Denbighshire's Vision

The Vision for Denbighshire was developed following consultation with the public, Councillors, County Council staff, Town and Community Councils, local businesses, the voluntary sector and other public sector organisations. It was formally agreed in 2006. The Vision sets out what people told us they wanted Denbighshire to be like in 2025.

We will celebrate and respect the diversity of our county. We will make sure that any actions we take protect the environment and do not have a negative impact on the lives of future generations

The **Vision** says that Denbighshire will be

- **Dynamic...** An exciting place to live, work, grow and enjoy life to the full
- **Delightful...** As beautiful as ever, but even greener, cleaner and safer.
- **Different...** By making our towns, villages and countryside even more attractive

Following agreement of the Vision, a Local Service Board (LSB) was formed whose membership is made up of the most senior Officers and Board Members of Denbighshire's key public and voluntary organisations. The LSB will be reviewing the Community Strategy now that the Vision has been agreed. The Community Strategy will set out how the Vision will be achieved by organisations working together.

- **Unity**

We all work for the same organisation. We as Councillors and staff should aim to reflect this in the way we behave and serve our communities. As our motto says "Unwn i wneud da" (We unite to do good) we work closely, cooperate willingly and support colleagues from across the organisation, regardless of the directorate, service or team in which they work. Our customers and communities expect the organisation to act as a single body making no distinction between directorates or services.

- **Pride**

We aim to create a sense of pride in working for our organisation. We should take pride in the work we do and what we achieve as an organisation. The challenges imposed by our mission are considerable but despite the difficulties, we aim to share an ambition to achieve the best outcomes.

- **Respect**

We aim to treat all people equally and with fairness, understanding that there are views and beliefs that differ from our own. We aim to involve and listen to our communities, showing consideration to their views and responding appropriately.

- **Integrity**

As councillors and staff we aim to manage ourselves to maximise performance, act with high standard of conduct and present a positive image of Denbighshire. We aim to be realistic with our colleagues and citizens about our achievements and the challenges we face and to be open and honest in the information we provide.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic document and contains key improvement themes which are cross cutting and are aimed at improving the way the Council runs and each service is delivered and includes the following commitment.

The Community & People Focused Theme is based on providing equal opportunities for all. Getting to know the community and unlocking the creativity of everyone regardless of age, disability, gender, race, , religion, belief, sexual orientation, caring responsibility or social economic background, will drive the Council forward. We will be engaging with and listening to communities and people, and providing feedback through a re-launched Citizens' Panel, local Community Forum events and improvements to our accessible and interactive website. These will be run alongside specific engagement activities with particular groups including homeless people, disabled people and others. This will be co-ordinated via our Community Engagement Strategy and Equalities Plan.

Statement of Intent

The Statement of Intent lays out a clear direction for the Council and guides everything we do.

It sets out how we will become 'a High Performing Council – Closer to the Community' and the values of the organisation. It is expected that all Members and staff will take account of these values in the way they behave.

Equality and Sustainability are principles which drive everything we do. We will always consider the impact our actions, plans and projects have on equality and sustainability issues.

Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is based on 4 themes A Safe County, A Prosperous County, A Healthy County, A County of Learning. The key influences that underpin the Strategy include equal opportunities, diversity, language and culture, caring responsibility and social economic background.

Mainstreaming Equality

The strategic aim of this Scheme is to meet the General and Specific Duties of the Act by mainstreaming equality into every aspect of the Council's activities. This places an onus on every member of the local authority to accept responsibility for promoting all the equality strands and challenge discrimination.

The strategic aim is to promote and 'mainstream' the principles and objectives of equality in all of its functions and services. We will do this by:

- We will monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of policies and focus on achieving outcome specific improvements.
- We aim to provide information about our services in the language and format of the user's choice.
- We will identify methods to improve our engagement and involvement with everyone who seek to use our services.
- We will promote and 'mainstream' the principles and objectives of equality in all of our functions and services

'We will be committed to a county with equality for people and language'

Equality Improvement Framework

An Equality Improvement Framework has recently been introduced by the Welsh Local Government Association in partnership with Welsh Assembly Government to replace the Equality Standard for Wales.

It has been developed to promote, manage and improve equality within local government and support local authorities in the delivery of their legal duties. This approach recognises equality duties and will not be a box ticking activity to comply with legislation. We propose to identify the outputs needed in order to develop outcome-based actions, which will be based on evidence from employees, service users and effective stakeholder involvement.

'We aim to be an 'Improving authority'

Corporate Equalities Group

The purpose of the Corporate Equality Group is to support Council policy and promote commitment to and implementation of best practice in relation to equality legislation. The group monitor progress in equality and diversity at a strategic level. They ensure that both and forthcoming Equality legislation and Human Rights are moved forward through the work and functions of the council. Members identify and agree organisational priorities for action and undertake such consultation or involvement of staff and the wider community as is necessary to do so.

The Equality Plan and Actions will be reviewed by the Corporate Equalities Group prior to it being adopted by the Council

Equality Officers Group

Each Service has nominated a dedicated Equality Champion to promote the development of the equality and diversity work within their Service as defined in the Action Plan. Officers will meet quarterly and review progress on equality actions which relate to their department service delivery and business plan.

Employee Equality Forum

In 2009 an Employee Equality Forum was formed to provide staff with a forum to raise issues and tackle areas of concern in relation to equality and diversity and human rights.

Local Service Board

The Council will seek to ensure that the Denbighshire Local Service Board, representing the key collective leadership across the public sector, will co-operate and integrate their approach to the equalities agenda through joint working i.e. consultation and engagement and sharing data on communities and their service needs

Citizen Panel

The Citizens' Panel will be sent surveys to complete and we will ask for volunteers from the Panel to take part in meetings and focus groups on topics of particular interest. We will be asking the Panel's opinion on a range of various topics, such as the services the Council provides and what they think the Council should be doing in the future. When we are developing Denbighshire's new Community Strategy we will also be asking the Panel's opinion on other public services

We positively encourage applications from disabled people and black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Residents need to be aged 16 or older to be on the Denbighshire Citizens panel. Citizen Panel statistics do not include information on preferred language, sexual orientation, religion and belief, nationality. This information will be included in the next survey.

The Council

The Council consists of 47 elected members each democratically accountable to residents of their electoral division. Many of the members are also elected to community councils within the area. At the 2008 County Council Elections 15 Elected Members were women.

The Cabinet

The Cabinet comprises of a Leader and 8 Councillors. Each Cabinet Member has a specific responsibility for a Council service. The Cabinet is responsible for policy development and therefore is involved in approving any policy amendments identified as a result of the impact assessments. The Cabinet is also responsible for giving their approval of this Corporate Equality Scheme. The Cabinet Member for Personnel has specific responsibility for Equalities and represents the Council on a pan Wales Equality Champion Network.

Unions are consulted on equality and diversity issues and are a member of the Corporate Equality Group. They have a responsibility to represent the views and concerns of staff and supporting the continuous improvement of equalities procedures and policies.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is a method that enables local authorities to examine proposed or existing policies, procedures and functions in order to identify and eliminate (or minimise) any negative impact these may have on a particular group or groups of people. Equality Impact Assessments also help to identify any unmet needs.

Local Authorities have a legal responsibility under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Equality Duty and the Gender Equality Duty to assess the impact of current and proposed, policies, procedures and functions in relation to each of these groups.

The Council has developed an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) toolkit. The equality impact screening document will identify any negative implications on any area within the policy, procedure or strategy, when a full assessment will be carried out.

A key development in impact assessment has been the establishment of an IMPACT Network comprising Officers from all Directorates. The purpose of this network is to promote the need for Equality Impact Assessment and improve Council strategies and plans to ensure as far as possible they do not negatively impact on other aspects of the Council

The Council will now IMPACT assesses all of its key strategies in order that we:

- Produce a standard approach to strategy and policy formulation;
- Improve the strategic planning process and quality of strategies, plans or policies developed by the Council through use of the equality impact assessment tool.
- Ensure that any new plan does not have a negative impact on our legislative duties or existing policies.

Key Objective

- Each directorate will nominate an officer to lead on these actions within their directorates
- Nominated officers will undertake Equality Impact Assessment training
- Each directorate will risk assess their policies and functions to identify and prioritise the need to Equality Impact Assess
- New Policies will be screened for Equality Impact Assessment

Section 4	Monitoring the Equality Plan
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Equality monitoring is the process used to collect, store and analyse data about people's backgrounds. Without monitoring we would not know if our equality policies and action plans are working and if all groups were being treated fairly.

We use monitoring as part of an ongoing process of analysis, asking questions, investigations and making changes that continually improve the quality of life for everyone, whether it is in our service provision or in our employment practices. Equality monitoring can help all services to ensure that they are reaching and offering equality of opportunity to all individuals and groups, and can help us to make changes based on facts and not assumptions.

Included in our action plan are the arrangements to consult on the issues we find, publicise the results and the steps we will take to remedy our practices and monitor our progress.

Although a large number of services collect data there is an inconsistency in the analysis and use of information to inform the delivery of services.

A corporate monitoring form has now been adopted for use across all directorates within the Council. All directorates will be encouraged to use this equality and diversity form when collecting data to identify who uses their service.

A survey is also undertaken using the Council website and information is collected when the public telephone our customer service department. Questionnaires are also available at council offices, one stop shops, libraries and leisure centres.

Reviewing the Plan

The Action Plan will be monitored on a regular basis by the Equalities Officer Group and its report will be discussed by the Corporate Equalities Group.

Six monthly monitoring will continue using the Corporate Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form through front line services. Members of the public will have the opportunity to share their information in order for us to collect data relating to the Equality Strands of: age, disability, gender, race religion and belief and sexual orientation. Denbighshire have also included a monitoring question relating to Carers responsibility.

In addition, the actions in this Plan will be added to Department Service Business Plans for which quarterly performance reports are produced and presented to Members and senior management.

The Council's Human Resources system (Trent) will be able to disaggregate employee information by equality strand on a range of different issues including recruitment, selection, and training and will be reported on annually.

Ffynnon Performance Management System

We will monitor the Scheme's implementation through the Performance Management process. The introduction of the new Ffynnon Performance Management System will enable us to keep track of all equality elements within the individual Directorate Business Plans.

In order that the disability, gender and race equality schemes and the parent Corporate Equalities Plan is mainstreamed into the Council's key overarching strategies (and indeed into national strategies such as the Making the Connections and Wales Programme for Improvement) the actions identified in the Action Plan will be incorporated into Service Business Plans.

Annual Reporting

We will produce an annual report on our Corporate Equalities Action Plan which will incorporate the actions identified in the disability, gender, race schemes and actions in relation to age, religion and belief and sexual orientation. The annual report will:

- Identify the actions we have taken to ensure we comply with our statutory duties during the twelve month period and demonstrate what actions we have taken to eliminate inequalities and / or discrimination within the Council.
-
- Identify which targets have been met and which ones have not and the reasons why.
- What consultation, involvement or information gathering has taken place.

Progress against the Plan will also be reported to the Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and it will be reviewed annually. The review will form part of the report to Members in July each year. These progress reports will be available on Denbighshire County Council's website.

The Council takes all complaints seriously. If anyone feels that the Council has failed to implement the Equality and Diversity Policy in the service they receive, a new complaints procedure is available and can be obtained by contacting the Council. All complaints, where relevant, are now logged in relation to their equality strand, these are monitored and reported on twice yearly.

A grievance procedure for employment complaints and a procedure for harassment and bullying for those employees who feel they face discrimination in the workplace are available.

Publishing the Plan

The Corporate Equality plan will be published and placed on the Council's website and hard copies will be available. The plan will be available in Welsh and English on the website or in other languages and alternative formats if required. Denbighshire's website homepage has a link to the Equalities and Diversity section.

The steps we need to take to achieve the above will include:

- Undertake an equality impact assessment of all relevant functions and policies to measure any adverse impact on race equalities and consult with the relevant Service on the results.
- We will consider how a service or policy might be changed to meet our general duty, as above and take appropriate action.
- We will consider the equality impact on all new policies or changes to policies.

Key Objectives

- Corporate monitoring exercise twice yearly to identify who uses council services
- Produce an annual report on progress made with Equality Plan Actions
- Produce annual workforce profile to identify employment information in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation
- Identify and monitor any trends twice yearly regarding complaints made in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation

Section 5	Developing the Equality Plan
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In February/March the draft Equalities Plan has been subject to an initial six week consultation period asking what people thought of the services the council provided and how services could be improved in order to develop the Equality Plan.

The public consultation and involvement exercise took the form of a website survey, hardcopy questionnaires available in our council offices, one stop shops, libraries and leisure services. It was also highlighted on the council intranet.

The involvement process was highlighted in the local press, organisation newsletters including Denbighshire Learning Disabilities Forum, Denfold, Denbighshire Disability Forum, Children and Young People's Partnership and Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council's (DVSC), Health and Well Being newsletter.

The corporate equalities officer attended a number of external and internal meetings and met on a one to one basis with local groups and organisations to collect their views to be included in the equality action plan. Where it was not possible to attend meetings the questionnaire was emailed to local contacts of national organisations, including:-

North Wales Race Equality Network (NWREN), Age Concern, Barnardos, Denbighshire Disability Forum, Denbighshire Learning Disability Forum, Learning Disabilities, NEWCIS, RNIB, RNID, Rowan Group, Stonewall, Womens Village, YouthDen, Children and Young Peoples Partnership, Chware Teg.

For a comprehensive list of issues raised, see appendix 2 Consultation – What you told us.

Denbighshire Community Forums: Q & A's - April 2009

As part of the council and the public sector's commitment to listen to the residents of Denbighshire, a series of forums were held for the public to come and discuss local issues with public services in their communities, where issues related to equality they have been included in the feedback comments and where relevant, the equality action plan.

There are a number of voluntary organisations which represent minority groups. These organisations have a raft of valuable information and experience that will benefit the scheme. The Council will connect with these organisations as part of the scheme to ensure the organisations and the people they represent become better involved in the process.

Key Objectives

- Produce a corporate involvement contact list
- All Services to use Corporate monitoring form
- We will consult using the language and format required
- We will consult and involve disabled people

Section 6

The Council as an Employer

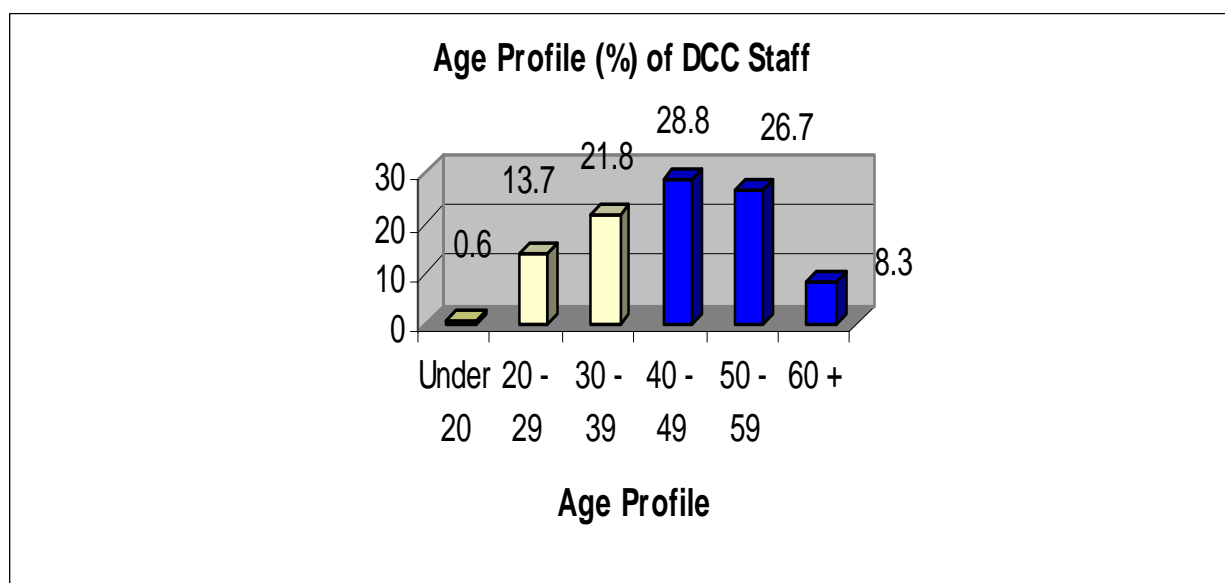
What we do now

- We monitor on a quarterly basis the Age, Gender, Disability and Ethnic Minority of staff.
- We introduced the Age Discrimination legislation eight months before it became law to allow staff to request to stay on beyond the age of 65 and continue to grant the majority of requests to carry on working for the Council.
- We have the “two ticks” Disability Award for recruiting disabled staff.
- We have seven modular e-learning training packages on equality and diversity, race, disability and gender are mandatory for all staff to complete
- The council have adopted a Corporate Equality Form. The form layout requests information in relation to ALL equality strands and also requests information on carer responsibilities.
- Customer Care training which includes equalities is mandatory for all staff.

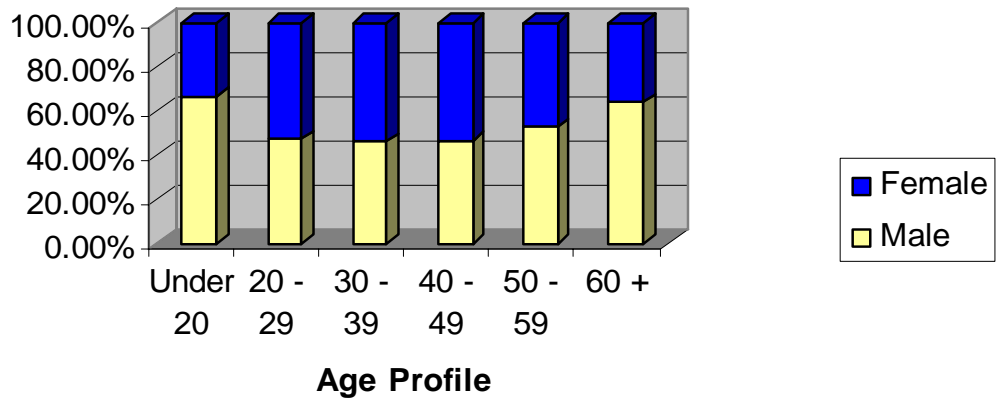
The authority is a Disability Symbol user, which means it has made five commitments as an employer:

- Guarantee an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy.
- Consult disabled employees about how they can develop and use their abilities at work.
- Make every effort when employees become disabled to keep them in employment.
- Develop key employees’ awareness of disability and employment.
- Each year, review achievements in meeting these commitments and let all employees know about progress and future plans.

Workforce Profiles - 2008/2009

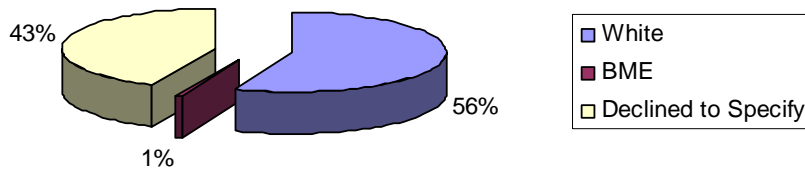


Gender Breakdown (%) of Age Profile of DCC Staff



The Council is a female dominated authority with 61% of staff female and aged over 40.

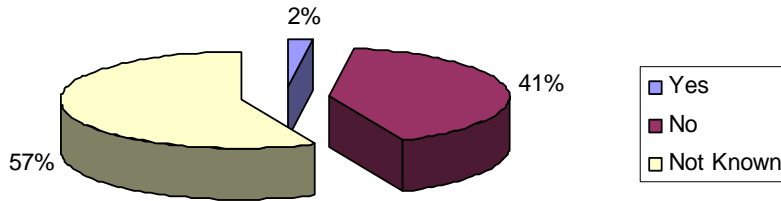
Ethnic Classification of DCC Employees



A large proportion of DCC staff choose not to disclose their ethnic background with only 52 people disclosing their ethnicity as a Black, Minority or Ethnic.

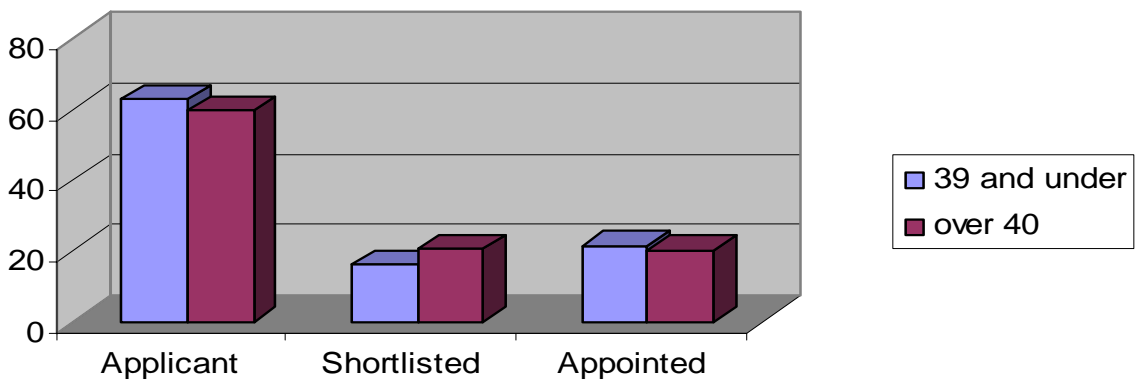
This is compared to figures showing 1088 people from ethnic minority groups living in the County, which equates to 1.1% of the resident population.

Staff Self Certified as Disabled in DCC



The disability status of staff is mostly unknown. However there are 134 members of staff who consider themselves to have a disability.

Age Profile (%) throughout the Recruitment Stages



In terms of age the council receives slightly more applicants from candidates under age 40 than above. The age groups are about equal when it eventually comes to the appointment stage with 52% being under 40 and 48% over 40.

94% of applications made to the council were from women with 97% of appointments eventually given to females. 56 applicants consider themselves to have a disability, 23 shortlisted and 11 appointed. The Council received 16 applications from BME candidates, 10 shortlisted and 11 appointed.

Recent evidence suggests that there are clear links between investment in health of the workforce and a number of positive outcomes. The Council is currently being assessed for the Corporate Health Standard which is a national mark of quality for health and well-being in the workforce.

Equality Impact Assessments

Personnel policies will be screened by December 09 and personnel officers trained on equality impact assessments.

Training and staff development

Although training has and is taking place throughout the Council, feedback indicates that further training particularly in relation to specific job roles e.g. front line staff, managers or to particular equality tasks such as equality impact assessment, is required to ensure staff have the understanding, capacity and confidence to implement the Council's Plan and meet the Council's statutory duties.

The council induction and customer care training sessions include a section on equal opportunities.

There are 7 e-quality modules available for staff in relation to Equal Opportunities, including age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and respect. The race, disability and gender modules are mandatory for all staff and Members to complete. The training can be adapted and delivered to all who do not have access to a PC.

More needs be done and employees encouraged to complete the e-module training on sexual orientation, religion and belief and respect.

An equalities training session for Elected Members took place in 2008. In order to encourage more Councillors to undertake specific equalities training, further opportunities will be explored.

There were 4586 people employed in March 2009 by the Council, less 2060 school staff. The table below shows the number of employees who have completed the e-module training sessions in relation to race, disability and gender.

Table 6

	12/12/2008	07/04/2009	Target 2009/2010
Race	673 (14.6%)	703 (15.3%)	20%
Disability	569 (12.4%)	597 (13%)	18%
Gender	313 (6.8%)	344 (7.5%)	12%

The tables below show the number of employees who have completed customer care and/or induction training.

Table 7 Customer Care Training

2008/2009	2.75%
2009/2010	Target 3%

42 people attended training in 08/09

Table 8 Induction Training

2008/2009	6.4%
2009/2010	Target 8%

98 people attended Induction in 08/09.

Employee Equality Forum

The first forum was held in May 2009 and is supported by Personnel and Strategic Policy Officers. The forum is at an early stage with a second meeting proposed for September 2009. The aim is to find out if there are any equality, diversity, language, or culture issues for employees and for employees to also have an opportunity to influence policy, practices and procedures of the Council.

Policies

Human Resources Policies Our HR policies are written in order to support all staff, for example, our bullying and harassment and grievance policies highlight the fact that some staff may wish to deal with a person of the same gender or ethnic background or may need assistance to complete the necessary documentation.

We support Equalities through a number of employment policies:

- Single Status
- Paternity leave
- Right to request flexible working
- Managing carers needs
- Right to request working beyond 65
- Disability leave
- Flexitime, which incorporates flexible working hours (flexible starting times and finishing times)
- Annualised working hours
- Job sharing or part time working
- Home working and term time working
- Employee Equal Opportunity Policies

Single Status Pay

Working Arrangements

In order to support staff, the Council offers a range of flexible arrangements to assist individuals to balance work and personal life. The flexible arrangements in place are subject to legislative changes: however arrangements on offer are at least as good as legislative requirements and often better.

Work Life Balance options include:

Maternity leave, maternity support leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, parental leave, IVF treatment, carer's leave, compassionate leave, disability leave, study and exam preparation, reserve forces, volunteer fire fighters and special constables.

Recruitment

Every job applicant is sent an equalities questionnaire to complete. The Council does collect statistics for job applicants in relation to gender, ethnicity and disability. However, we recognise that the data sets are incomplete because the applicant can choose whether or not to complete the questionnaire and many are not returned.

Selection

We collect data on new and existing employees by the equalities strands of gender, ethnicity and disability. The information is not mandatory for job applicants to provide.

Monitoring

HR system - Trent. The system allows us to access statistics about all of our employees by equalities strand, including the training they have attended and completed. This will help us make sure that all groups of employees have equal access to the training which will assist their career development. We also want to make sure that all staff are aware of equalities issues and provide excellent customer care to everyone

We monitor employment of minority groups using Workforce Planning and annually publish the information on the council intranet and website.

Table 9 Equalities Monitoring of the Recruitment Process

Indicator	Indicator type	Data 08/09		Age* Data 08/09	
% of job applicants by equalities strands	Monitoring	Age	*	<20	2
				20-29	9
		Disabled People	2%	30-39	7
		Ethnic Minority	0.74%	40-49	7
		Ethnicity Not Known	68%	50-59	4
		Male	50%	>60	1
		Female	50%	Unknown	70
% of job applicants short listed by equalities strands	Monitoring	Age	*	<20	1
				20-29	16
		Disabled People	3%	30-39	14
		Ethnic Minority	1%	40-49	16
		Ethnicity Not Known	54%	50-59	11
		Male	30%	>60	2
		Female	70%	Unknown	40
% of appointments by equalities strands	Monitoring	Age	*	<20	6
				20-29	27

Indicator	Indicator type	Data 08/09	Age* Data 08/09		
		Disabled People	2%	30-39	22
		Ethnic Minority	0.43%	40-49	22
		Ethnicity Not Known	58%	50-59	13
		Male	27%	>60	3
		Female	73%	Unknown	7

Table 10

Performance indicator	Indicator type	Data 08/09	Improvement targets	
% of women in senior management posts	Policy Agreement	46.40%	07 - 08	43%
			08 - 09	43%
			09 - 10	43%

Key Objectives

- Update Equal Opportunities Policy
- Set up Employee Equality Forum
- Produce annual report showing workforce planning information
- Consider the next steps for corporate equality training for council employees, including senior managers and Members

What we do now

Customer Services are committed to ensuring that services, facilities and resources provided by the Council are accessible and responsive to each individual and all communities. All customers can expect

- Provision of services that meet their individual needs
- Courtesy and helpfulness when accessing our services
- To be listened to and their enquiry to be dealt with efficiently and correctly
- Easily identifiable Council representatives
- Provision of information that meets their individual needs
- An easy means to give feedback to the Council

New initiative: Denbighshire County Council residents and visitors can now text the council with their customer enquiry. They will receive a bilingual automated text from the Council to confirm receipt of the text followed by a full response within 10 days wherever possible.

Denbighshire County Council has introduced some Web 2.0 platforms.

Web 2.0 includes such things as social-networking sites (perhaps the most well-known one is Facebook), video-sharing sites, blogs, RSS feeds, podcasts and mashups. Using Web 2.0 means that we will be going to where people are in order to connect and communicate with.

We will continue to promote equalities by including regular articles in Council publications such as the Council's County Voice newsletter to all residents and the staff newsletter Headlines.

Procurement

Where services are provided in partnership or by a third party on behalf of the Council, it remains the responsibility of the Council to ensure that everyone complies with the principles of our Equality Schemes and they adopt and work within the guidance relating to disability, gender and race specific duties.

7.1 Race

New Language Service - In January 2009 we changed our service provider from Language Line to 'thebigword' The procedure for using the service is the same but telephone numbers and our access code have changed.

The Council have published a Migrant Worker Information Pack giving newly arriving migrants information on how to access services and about their rights in the community they have now joined. The welcome pack will assist the service provider as it will inform migrants as to how they can access Council services and it will benefit the local community by explaining to migrants how to adapt to life in Denbighshire.

The Council also has active representation on the North Wales Police led North Wales Forum on Unauthorised Encampments which co-ordinates the local authority and police

initiatives and policies with a view to establishing a partnership approach through agreed protocols etc.

Denbighshire County Council have established an officer group to identify and address key issues in relation to gypsy and travellers, ensuring we meet their needs whilst having regard to the wider community. The officer group has cross Directorate representation including Housing, Planning, Social Services, Property Services, Education and Strategic Policy and involvement from North Wales Police.

The Local Housing Market Assessment is a partnership between Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd local authorities, the Snowdonia National park Authority and Bangor University and is undertaking a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for North West Wales commencing April 2009.

The Welsh Assembly Government has reintroduced a requirement for Local Authorities to undertake a twice yearly count of Gypsies and Traveller sites within the County in January and July.

Conwy and Denbighshire plan to open a part-time centre for Gypsy Traveller children and are recruiting a Learning Support Assistant. It is intended to open the centre for 4 mornings per week offering placements to Gypsy Traveller children of secondary school age living in Conwy or Denbighshire. The aim of the provision is to re-engage and maintain these young people in accessing education and it anticipated that the centre will be in the Rhyl area.

We are members of the North Wales Gypsy and Traveller Group which is focussing on identifying regional solutions to Gypsy and Traveller needs and includes joint working with the police.

The Education Department is working with Conwy County Council to provide services to Gypsy and Traveller children and is a member of a North Wales Consortium sharing training and good practice to support children on roadside encampments. Ethnic minority achievement and Gypsy and Traveller achievement is collated and monitored by Education officers.

Our Housing Benefit service has a language preferred indicator so that communications can be sent in the language indicated by the individual and is currently exploring a protocol in relation to minority groups.

7.2 Disability

The Community Equipment Services Integration (CESI) Stores, has received financial support from the Welsh Assembly Government, Denbighshire County Council, Denbighshire Local Health Board, and the North Wales NHS Trust (Central)

The Council has made a number of improvements to its buildings over the past 3 years as part of the Disability Discrimination Act 2004 duties. This programme of work will continue to ensure that we improve the accessibility of our buildings for staff and service users. Phase 1 is complete and an action plan is in place to address Phase 2.

Council parking attendants monitor all disabled bays for occupants not displaying a Blue Badge and Parking Control Notices are issued. There are currently 80 Pay and Display ticket machines throughout Denbighshire, all are now at an accessible height and acceptable distance from parking bays.

Council Newsletter Podcast: An audio version of the Council's newsletter 'County Voice' is available quarterly for download on the website in partnership with RNIB Cymru.

Information is available highlighting what facilities are available at Council offices when used for meetings.

Speech Enabled Website – 'BrowseAloud': Denbighshire's website is supported by the text-to-speech software 'BrowseAloud'. The application reads aloud web page text for those with mild visual impairments or low literacy and reading skills.

A sensory nature garden on land adjacent to Ysgol Mair, Rhyl,. The garden has taken two years to create and will be a resource for school children throughout the town

We provide assisted bin collections for vulnerable and disabled people.

Adapted housing provided to meet the specific needs of residents.

The Council provide with RNID Cymru a communication service for deaf, deafened, deafblind and hard of hearing people using council services.

The Children with Disabilities Team works to ensure disabled children and their families receive the services to which they are entitled, through direct provision of services (e.g. short breaks schemes); commissioning services (e.g. Barnardo's "Play and Leisure Scheme"); promoting inclusion (e.g. nursery sponsorships); and offering families Direct Payments to purchase services tailored to the individual needs of disabled children.

Education

Several secondary schools have developed their Disability Equality Plans and have involved children and young disabled people.

In line with the Inclusion Policy an increased number of children and young people with significant disabilities are able and encouraged to attend main stream schools.

Denbighshire has been at the forefront of developments with regard to Welsh language Braille. An agreement has been reached with a Welsh publisher to translate novels into Welsh Braille.

Access Audits has been completed on all schools. Adaptations have been made to buildings and accessible toilets made available in all our secondary schools.

Ysgol Tir Morfa has recently won an award for its new accessible building.

7.3 Gender

As part of our information gathering process we will monitor who uses our services according to gender and will endeavour to understand whether men, women and transgender use the services in different ways and what are their differing needs.

Denbighshire County Council has elected a female Councillor as Leader and in 2009 elected its first female Chairman of the Council. In 2009 four out of the nine Cabinet Members were women.

Fathers are encouraged to join special play sessions in Rhyl and Denbigh, as part of Action for Children's efforts to highlight the importance of children having an active male role model in their lives. The project promotes the equal role of fathers and male carers in raising children, and these sessions provide opportunities to meet and share parenting and life experiences

We have a domestic abuse forum for which the main focus is women, although men also receive support and we have a number of projects to support young people offending behaviour which is largely dominated by males. Our Housing Benefit service has developed a process for the Women's Refuge Hostel.

The Way Forward- According to research, the inconsistent use of condoms is in part a result of lack of access, availability and acceptability of condoms amongst young people. For this reason the Denbighshire Healthy Sexuality Project (which has successfully obtained Cymorth Funding for another two years) has plans to work in partnership with the youth service and Rhyl College to extend the CCard scheme into the college and youth clubs within Denbighshire

Staff from the Housing Service have received gender specific equality training in relation to housing.

7.4 Age

Older people who are deaf and use BSL have been asked to take part in the BSL Timeline, a partnership project run by Education Services and Library Services. The aim behind the project, which has been funded by the Denbighshire's Older People's Strategy, is the revision of the national curriculum, which encourages the study of History at Key Stage 2 to look at contrasting periods from the 19th and 20th centuries and children will be able to learn about the experiences of the deaf community.

Social Services have a contract with the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to support, empower, engage and consult with young people looked after by the local authority

The Wales Council for Deaf People is providing training for a tutor to teach lip reading to adults with funding from Denbighshire's Older Peoples Strategy. The training ends in June 2009, at which point the Wales Council for Deaf People will advise the local authority how best to deploy the tutor's services to benefit people with a hearing impairment in the community.

The Denbighshire Children & Young People's Single Plan has 7 core aims, 2 of which are to ensure young people:

Core Aim 3: Enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation.

Core Aim 5: Are listened to, treated with respect and have their race and cultural identity recognised.

Social Services – have a 7 point standards for older persons covering Courtesy & Respect, Confidentiality and Privacy, Involvement and Participation, Staff support, acceptable Response Times

The Council have a 50 plus initiative for leisure and free swimming for the over 60 and under 16 year olds.

The Council have a National Service Framework and a strategy for Older People which has implemented some innovative projects such as the Council's Night Rider Scheme.

Data on age is collected for homeless people and people in sheltered housing and for those applying for housing benefit because individuals may have different requirements depending upon their age.

Benefits service have undertaken joint training with the Pension Service in relation to delivering services to the elderly. We also provide assisted bin collection for older people.

The first Extra Care" development in North Wales has been built in Rhyl We propose to develop a six bed high level support scheme for young people and assist those leaving care to obtain suitable accommodation.

We are piloting a warden scheme in the private sector to support older people living in their own homes.

Weekly Intergenerational Lunch – Young and older people from the local community providing lunch, supported by Young people volunteering from Marsh Youth Group, Older people from the over 50's club and Vale Residents Association.

Older persons Champion Training Day held on 29 April 2008 in partnership with Local Health Board.

Children and Young People's Partnership takes action to support and empower young carers. For the children and young people in Denbighshire that care for siblings, a parent or family member, getting the support they need to succeed at school and in life is paramount.

Partners from a wide range of organisations in Denbighshire have joined forces to write a strategy for young carers. We realise that while we cannot necessarily reduce the numbers of young carers, we can improve the ways in which we support young carers.

The Task and Finish Group, supported by the Strategic Partnership and the Children and Young People's Plan (2008-11), is developing a common agreed identification protocol as part of the Strategy and is exploring options for young carers to gain accreditation for the work they do at home. The Strategy is due to be launched next Spring (2010).

7.5 Religion

We recognise that for many people, religious identification is at least as important as their racial identity. We will take steps to engage with religious centres and faith groups.

Mult-faith calander information available on the intranet for council employees

Working towards better consultation and involvement of local faith groups.

By equality monitoring through customer services, front line staff at one stop shops and libraries on the Council on line questionnaire, 76% identified themselves as Christian 22% identified themselves as having no religion and 2% of muslim faith.

7.6 Sexual Orientation

Consultation

A North Wales LGB Forum Speak Easy event was held at the end of November 2007 for service providers to consult local lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people. Stonewall Cymru worked in partnership with the West Rhyl Young People's Project to organise the event, which was funded as the culmination of the Inside-Out Project. The report is available on our website.

Corporate Monitoring Form includes collecting information on sexual orientation in order for us to identify who accesses our council services.

We actively promote venues for civil partnerships and were one of the first Councils to have a ceremony performed within their County in Wales

Table 11 Civil Partnerships in Denbighshire

	1/1/2007 – 31/12/2007	1/1/2008 – 31/12/2008
Male	3	3
Female	4	11

Section 8	Race Equality Scheme 2008-2011
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Our Revised Scheme 2008-2011

This Race Equality Scheme has been prepared to enable the Council to meet the requirements of the Act. This scheme sets out how the Council will meet its statutory obligation, during the next three years, by undertaking impact assessments on our functions that have been assessed as high and medium relevance to our general duty to eliminate any racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

This Scheme has taken into account the recommendations made by the Commission for Racial Equality in Wales in their review of Local Government Race Equality Schemes 'Putting Priorities in Focus 2007.'

The Government introduced the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 in response to the recommendations of the MacPherson Inquiry report into the death of Stephen Lawrence. This Act places a duty on public authorities to promote racial equality. The aim is to ensure that public authorities offer accessible services, which meet the needs of the community and offer equal opportunities in their employment duties. The Act strengthens the Race Relations Act (1976) by placing a statutory duty on public authorities to promote race equality.

General duty

The general duty set out in Section 71 (1) of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, states that public authorities must have due regard to the need to: -

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

The general duty applies to every public authority and the aim of the duty is to make race equality central to the way public authorities work, in service delivery, policy making and employment.

Specific duty

Additionally, the Act places a specific duty on local authorities to produce a Race Equality Scheme, which sets out its arrangements for meeting the general duty by:

- monitoring policies, functions, and procedures for any adverse impact on race equality;
- assessing, and consulting on, the likely impact of proposed policies;
- publishing the results of the assessments, consultation and monitoring;
- making sure that the public have access to information and services;
- training employees on the general duties;

- monitoring and analysing, by racial group: existing employees and applicants for jobs, promotion and training; grievances; disciplinary action; performance appraisals; and employees leaving the authority.

8.1 Communicating with Service Users

All of Denbighshire's Services have access to a telephone translation service and front line staff have been trained in its use, 'thebigword'.

We have distributed the Welsh Assembly Government's 'Welcome to Wales' information packs and are currently investigating the production of a Denbighshire specific leaflet.

The Welsh Assembly Government has reintroduced a requirement for Local Authorities to undertake a twice yearly count of Gypsies and Traveller sites within their County. The results were:

Table 12 Denbighshire Twice years Count

01/2007	07/2007	01/2008	07/2008	01/2009	07/2009
NIL	2 caravans	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

The Commission for Racial Equality's Report 'Common Ground' (Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers) has produced recommendations for local authorities to adopt. The Officer Group will be reviewing the Councils policies in light of this report and, where practical and relevant, adopting a strategic approach to meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers whilst also having due regard to the wider community.

8.2 Migrant Workers

- Denbighshire is in a similar position to most other Welsh Authorities in not knowing the number of migrant workers in the County and unclear as to their intentions in terms of staying for a relatively short period or settling in the area indefinitely.
- The Welsh Assembly's Equality of Opportunity Committee: Migrant Workers Inquiry has identified that there are significant barriers experienced by migrant workers and their families in accessing public services particularly in housing, health care and education.

Denbighshire is currently participating in an analysis of our services to migrant workers in conjunction with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership who are tasked with identifying which organisations (statutory, voluntary and community) are responding to migrant workers issues and how the work can be coordinated effectively. The information will follow the following themes namely health, education, community safety, community cohesion and employment.

We are also participating in research being carried out by Map Analysis on behalf of the Wales Consortium for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrant Workers who are funded by the Home Office.

- iii) The information gathered on how we deliver services within the County will inform our Race Equality Action Scheme and the results of the cross- Wales analysis by the Migration Partnership will identify areas of good practice from other areas of Wales.

8.3 Delivering Services and Reporting Complaints

- i) Denbighshire's Supporting People Strategy identifies several initiatives in relation to assisting the delivery of services to ethnic groups and individuals.
- ii) The Black African Women Step Out (BAWSO) group approached Denbighshire's Supporting People Lead Officers with evidence that women from ethnic minorities in Denbighshire are not accessing the refuge provision in Denbighshire and are having to travel 150 miles to access services in Swansea and Newport where specialist provision is available. To address this issue the Supporting People Strategy plans to develop domestic abuse outreach support provision targeted at Black and Minority Ethnic women. This cross boundary, regional project across North Wales will provide services to this group in partnership with BAWSO. The project will be a 2-year pilot in order to establish a need for this provision.
- iii) The Supporting People Operational Plan also highlights the need to commission some research to identify relevant population trends and predictions, particularly in relation to BME migration, as this will impact on the translation of documentation for access to services.

Within the Social Services & Housing Directorate Plan there is the intention to develop a one stop shop within the County in conjunction with the North Wales Race Equality Network (NWREN).

The objective of this one stop shop is:

- To provide a safe and sensitive environment, where workers from outside the UK can access support, accurate information and specialist advice services or be appropriately signposted, where possible in a language of choice.
- To attract hard to reach clients through culturally and language sensitive marketing materials whilst increasing understanding of those issues amongst other service providers.
- To negotiate with other agencies to provide complimentary support surgeries at the drop-in centre.
- To counteract negative stereotyping by highlighting to other agencies that the needs of workers from outside the UK are not disproportional just different.

The primary target is Migrant workers and Refugees. Subsequent targets will be overseas students, BME contract workers and resident BMEs.

8.4 Consultation and Involvement

- i) Problems exist throughout North Wales as regards consulting with people from ethnic minorities. We work with organisations such as the North Wales Race Equality Network however we accept that we could improve on engaging with minority groups or individuals. The North Wales Equalities Officer Group consisting of representatives from all the North Wales authorities and the public health sector agree that establishing joint consultative events is the most

effective forum for overcoming the barriers to engaging with the ethnic community.

- ii) There are also cross county opportunities to engage with individual ethnic groups and opportunities are being developed to meet North Wales groups such as the North Wales Filipino Society and the North Wales Chinese Women's Association.
- iii) The Race Equality Scheme whilst in draft form has been published on our website and press releases making the public aware of opportunities to contribute to the Scheme or comment on it. The Draft Scheme has also been sent to partner agencies in the public and voluntary sector and employees of the Council have had an opportunity to express their views on its content.
- iv) We recognise that for many people religious identity is at least as important as their racial identity. We will also take steps to engage with religious centres and faith groups, together with Gypsies, Travellers, Refugees and Asylum Seekers when we consult. We will continue to identify groups to consult with, and also work in partnership with other agencies to improve consultation mechanisms.
- v) **‘Have your say’: engaging the local community**

This consultation and engagement event was held in November 2007 and was a joint community involvement event by Local Authorities, Local Health Boards and the Health Trusts. The key objectives of this event were to:

- identify and share areas of good practice in service delivery for people from different racial or cultural backgrounds in North Wales
- identify any weaknesses and barriers in access to and the delivery of service experienced by different groups in North Wales
- seek suggestions and solutions for improvement from service users
- identify future public involvement mechanisms to sustain engagement

The event was advertised extensively through various local media channels including leaflet drops with targeted local small businesses, libraries and network groups. Other equality organisations were informed about the event including North Wales Race Equality Network and the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

There were different discussion groups facilitated in the languages of Welsh, English, Chinese, Filipino and Polish led by community representatives and supported by facilitators from the organising bodies. The full report can be found on our website.

Local people identified the following issues and solutions:

- Promote good race relations.
- Know the local community.
- Engage using a range of methods as advised by community groups.
- Provide clear information.
- Provide information in language of choice.

- Raise awareness of the availability and use of interpretation and translation services.
- Increase cultural competence, awareness and understanding of staff.
- Employment issues.
- Build upon and strengthen joint working across the public sector in North Wales to make a difference.

There were several issues that were identified as being specific to Denbighshire. These comments fall into three categories namely the way we communicate, barriers to accessing our services and training of staff.

Communication:

- We will develop the useful contacts that were made by Officers at the event in order to engage further with racial groups.
- We will ensure this report is widely distributed within the Council in order that it informs future delivery of services
- We will ensure the Report is accessible on our website and promote its existence.
- The Report will influence the Race Equality section of our integrated Equalities Scheme.
- We will continue to undertake equalities monitoring of our customers and use the information on languages spoken within the County to inform our delivery of services.

Language barriers

- We will continue to monitor the number of languages spoken within the County and in particular our schools in order to ensure we meet the requirements of our customers and identify language barriers.

9.1 What is a Disability Equality Scheme?

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 was introduced in order to improve opportunities for disabled people. Under this act it is unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have a physical, sensory or mental impairment. Service providers are also required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled people are able to access services and employment. By October 2004, physical barriers to access should have been removed.

The Government passed the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 stating that "By 2025, disabled people in Britain should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society"

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on a wide range of public bodies including local authorities to promote disability equality (the general duty). It also creates a specific duty to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and to report on it annually.

The Scheme will be completely reviewed and revised every three years. This means that the Council, in carrying out its functions must have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- Take steps to take account of disabled person's disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

The Act also requires that public bodies should involve disabled people in the development of the scheme.

The Duty to Promote Disability Equality Statutory Code of Practice defines a disabled person as:

"A person who has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities".

This is a very wide-ranging statement, but will generally cover people with physical, mental and sensory impairments and those with severe disfigurements. People diagnosed with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are also protected, but from the point of diagnosis, not when they become disabled as a result of the illness.

9.2 The Social Model of disability

Everyone has a fundamental human right to independent living but this right is often denied to them living in a society which uses the 'Medical Model' of disability. This defines people by their impairments and the problems they face when seeking equality.

The Council seeks to improve the independence of disabled people by using the 'Social Model' of disability, which means that the Council continues to strive to make all the improvements it can by removing the physical and attitudinal barriers that may limit the independence of disabled people.

The Social Model locates the 'problem' outside the disabled person and therefore offers a more positive approach because:

- It doesn't 'blame' the individual or turn them into the problem
- It involves everyone in identifying solutions
- It encourages co-operative problem solving
- It removes barriers for others as well as disabled people, that is, it is an equal opportunities model
- It acknowledges disabled people's rights to full participation as citizens

Education

Each school in Denbighshire has its own Disability Equality Scheme. This will reflect the way in which each school ensures that it promotes disability equality in both its general and specific duties. It will take into account the equalities breakdown of its pupils and consider whether it has a bearing on performance and put in place actions to address any imbalances that are identified.

Our Vision says "We will improve access by developing better transport links for journeys within Denbighshire, between rural areas and the main towns, and between Denbighshire and other areas".

"Our diverse county will attract more visitors throughout the year who will experience Denbighshire's outstanding natural and built environment, culture and wide range of outdoor activities".

"We will use new technology and provide services which enable people to stay longer in their own homes and have houses more suitable for disabled people".

9.3 How We Involve Disabled People in Identifying Objectives for the Scheme?

At the heart of the Disability Equality Duty is the requirement to involve disabled people in producing the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This is not only a requirement of the duty but brings tremendous benefit in terms of expertise to the Council in identifying and implementing appropriate changes.

The Council accepts this duty as a way of further developing its association with disabled people. We recognise that to date there has been limited involvement of disabled people but during the 3 year life of the current plan it will continue to widen this involvement.

We will however ensure that the following key principles are applied when seeking to involve disabled people:

- We will involve disabled people in the manner and format that they request
- We will ensure all venues used are accessible for everyone
- We will ensure the equality plan is widely distributed within the Council in order that it informs future delivery of services
- We will ensure the plan is accessible on our website and promote its existence
- That costs associated with being involved are covered, including travelling expenses for voluntary groups and disabled people.

For a comprehensive list of issues raised, see appendix 2 Consultation – What you told us.

Key Objectives

- Improve the way we communicate and involve disabled people and their carers and make sure information is more accessible
- More involvement at local group meetings – be proactive in approaching groups
- Improve access to the environment, including footpaths, dropped kerbs, pedestrian crossings, raised bus kerbs, public wc's and car parking provision
- Work with operators to improve access to public transport for disabled people - increase the number of low floor easy access buses and provide access for disabled people to railway stations
- Ensure the needs of disabled people are more effectively considered when approving the development of buildings and regeneration schemes
- Ensure all new schemes built by Registered Social Landlords using the Social Housing Grant meet Lifetime Homes standards
- Disability Equality Training for staff, including senior management and Members

10.1 What is a Gender Equality Scheme?

The Equality Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women

This is known as the 'general duty' and has come into effect on 6 April 2007. The duty applies to all public authorities in respect of all of their functions. This means it applies to policy-making, service provision, employment matters, and in relation to enforcement or any statutory discretion and decision-making. It also applies to a public authority in relation to services and functions which are contracted out.

Public authorities are expected to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote equality of opportunity between men and women in all of their functions. Due regard comprise two linked elements: proportionality and relevance. The weight which public authorities give to gender equality should therefore be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function.

As part of the duty, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training, for people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. For the purposes of this Code, the expression 'transgender' is used to refer to the people who are covered by those provisions.

To support progress in delivering the general duty, there is also a series of 'specific duties' which apply to listed public authorities.

Those specific duties, in brief, are:

- To prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- To gather and use information on how the public authority's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.
- To consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- To assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years

Did you know? The Office of National Statistics has released figures showing that the full time gender pay gap in Wales has risen to 12.7%, up from 10.3%

The duty is intended to address the fact that, despite thirty years of sex discrimination legislation there is still widespread gender inequality.

The duty is intended to improve this situation, both for men and for women, for boys and for girls. Gender roles and relationships structure men's and women's lives. Women are frequently disadvantaged by policies and practices that do not recognise their greater caring responsibilities, the different pattern of their working lives, their more limited access to resources and their greater vulnerability to domestic violence and sexual assault. Men are also disadvantaged by workplace cultures that do not support their family or childcare responsibilities, by family services that assume they have little or no role in parenting, or by health services which do not recognise their different needs. Both sexes suffer from stereotyping of their roles and needs.

In order to allow the gender duty to take full effect, the government has extended the Sex Discrimination Act to make it unlawful for public bodies to discriminate on the grounds of gender when performing their public functions.

10.2 Gender Reassignment Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

These regulations extended the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) to cover discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment in employment and vocational training. Vocational training, in this case, includes all higher education students.

Any reference to discrimination in employment against men or women in parts II and III of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) also applies to individuals who have gender dysphoria. A case, therefore, can be brought against an employer or individual person for any unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 cover only direct discrimination. It is unlawful to discriminate against a person in an employment context or vocational training context on the grounds that s/he person intends to undergo gender reassignment, or is undergoing gender reassignment, or has at some time in the past undergone gender reassignment.

The duty should help the public sector, and those working with it, to identify and respond to stereotyping, sex discrimination and sexism, resulting in improvements for all.

10.3 Teenage Pregnancies in Denbighshire

In 2006, Denbighshire recorded the third highest teenage conception rate in North Wales, although this was lower than the Welsh average. In addition, rates in Denbighshire have decreased since 2004 (50.5 per thousand).

It should be noted that these figures are difficult to interpret, because there is no indication of how many of these pregnancies were planned and wanted.

Evaluation of the service took place in October 2008 where the opinions of staff and young people were collected to identify the impact of the C-Card scheme

Table 13 Conception rates for females aged under 18 increased in Wales from

		Conceptions
2005 (Denbighshire)	Aged 15 – 17	43.6 per thousand
2006 (statistics for Wales)	Aged 15 – 17	44.9 per thousand
2006 (Denbighshire)	Aged 15- 17	42.6 per thousand
2006 (Welsh average)	Aged 15 – 17	44.9 per thousand

10.4 Domestic Violence

It is reported that 1 in every 4 women in England and Wales will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives and 2 women a week are murdered by a partner or ex-partner. 1 in 20 women have been sexually assaulted or raped (Welsh Women's Aid). 1 in every 6 men in England and Wales will be affected by domestic abuse at some point in their lives and 30 men per year are killed by a partner or ex-partner (Home Office).

Table 14

Serious Violent Crimes	2007/2008	Target 2008/2009	Reduction
First Time Domestic Victims	1009	1060	+5%
Repeat Domestic Victims	696	660	-5%

Key Objectives

- Continue to ensure the percentage of women in senior management roles is more reflective of the 70% of women who work for the council
- Ensure women and men are represented at all levels of the workforce and in all areas of work
- Eliminate the gap between women and men's pay through Single Status
- Ensure employees with caring responsibilities receive support from the Council and flexible and part-time working opportunities are available at all levels of work
- Use Corporate Monitoring Form to collect service user and employee information in relation to transgender
- Increase the number of reported domestic violence incidents / decrease the number of domestic violence incidents in Denbighshire.

11.1 What is the Equality Bill

It should bring all legislation together and ensure it is consistent, understandable and easier for people to use. The present duties on race, disability and gender are due to be harmonised into one new duty, which will cover all seven equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation and there will also be a new duty to consider Socio-economic disadvantage (social class).

The duties mean that we will have to take action to deliver better outcomes for people of different racial groups, disabled people and men and women, including transsexual men and women. The duties will require us to take steps not just to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, but also to actively promote equality. The duties provide a framework to help tackle persistent and long-standing issues of disadvantage.

The earliest that these changes will come into full force is the end of 2011. Until then it is important that we continue to meet our existing obligations and use the duties to improve the impact of our work. In order to prepare for the new duty we will start collecting information on the groups covered by all seven equality strands

11.2 Age

The Council is committed to providing services which treat people fairly, regardless of their age.

For example, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 apply to employment and vocational training, and prohibit unjustified direct and indirect age discrimination, as well as harassment and victimisation on grounds of age. The regulations (which do not affect the age at which people can claim their state pension):

- ban age discrimination in terms of recruitment, promotion and training.
- ban unjustified retirement ages of below 65.
- remove the current age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights.

They also introduced:

- A right for employees to request working beyond retirement age and a duty on employers to consider that request.
- A new requirement for employers to give at least six months notice to employees about their intended retirement date so that individuals can plan better for retirement, and be confident that "retirement" is not being used as cover for unfair dismissal.

Examples of key issues whilst applying this legislation

- Avoid job descriptions containing the words 'experienced', 'mature', 'young', 'junior', 'senior' etc, and graduate schemes that use terminology or images that imply that graduates are young
- Offering equal access to training opportunities regardless of age
- Supporting staff who have caring responsibilities, although it is acknowledged that not all carers are older people

Younger and Older People

The Council recognises the needs of groups such as children, young people and older people to access services and that there may be particular barriers and needs to be considered in ensuring services work effectively to serve these parts of our community.

11.3 Sexual Orientation

Equality Act 2006 to make it unlawful to discriminate in the delivery of goods and services.

The Civil Partnership Act (2005) enables same-sex couples to form a civil partnership by registering as civil partners. Implementation of this Act required amendment to the Sex Discrimination Act

Civil partners are now recognised as having the same rights as married couples. This includes:

- Accessing social security benefits and tax credits.
- Maintenance and child support rights.

Employment rights, such as health insurance.

- Rights on the death of a partner including inheriting property or tenancy, pensions, life assurance, fatal accident or criminal injuries compensation.
- Prior to December 2005, cohabiting same sex couples had none of these rights, regardless of how long they had been together.

Further rights with regard to parental responsibility for children by civil partners also came into force on 30th December 2005 under the Adoption and Children Act 2002

The Employment Equality Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003

Makes it unlawful to discriminate against the following:

- persons of the same sex
- persons of the opposite sex
- persons of the same sex and of the opposite sex

Examples of key issues whilst applying this legislation:

- Recognising and being respectful of individuals sexual preference
- Maintaining confidentiality about sexual preference and not deliberately disclosing a persons sexuality
- Extending benefits to same sex partners i.e. pensions, parental leave
- Consider facilities when organising team events where partners are invited along e.g. hotels that welcome gay couples
- Consider the use of language that enforces stereotypical heterosexual images e.g. parental and maternity leave, use paternity leave
- Discrimination in employment and vocational training

11.4 Religion and Belief

Religious beliefs:

72% Christian, 3% Muslim, and 1% Hindu. An estimated 8.2 million (approximately 14% of the adult population in the UK) are active members of religious organisations.

The Employment Equality Religion or Belief Regulations 2003

- Makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief defined as being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief.

Equality Act (2006)

The measures established in the Act close a loophole that previously meant that while people were protected against discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality or national or ethnic origin, they were not protected against discrimination on the basis of religion.

This addresses the imbalance which emerged from case law under the Race Relations Act in which Jews and Sikhs are afforded protection while members of other religions are not.

The Act provides protection in the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises, and in public functions, from:

Direct discrimination, where a person, on grounds of religion or belief, is treated less favourably than another.

Indirect discrimination, where a provision, criterion or practice has the effect of putting people of a particular religious belief at a disadvantage, which cannot be justified.
Victimisation, where someone is treated less favourably than others because, for example, they have complained of discrimination or have assisted someone else in a complaint.

Harassment (public functions only), where conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for people of a particular religion or belief.

Race legislation case law currently affords protection to Jews and Sikhs from discrimination in the provision of goods and services on the grounds that they are regarded as of race. It is intended that the protection will be extended to everyone on the grounds of his or her religion or belief.

These measures ensure that providers of goods, facilities, services or premises, cannot refuse to provide their goods, facilities, services etc. to someone because of their religion or belief. For example a shopkeeper can no longer refuse to serve someone on the grounds of his or her religion or belief.

Examples of key issues whilst applying this legislation

- Accommodating religious needs such as, requests for time off to attend religious functions
- Acceptance of a persons religious/belief system
- Accommodating dress requirements

- Accommodating a persons specific dietary requirements, such as, Halal or Kosher food
- Providing suitable prayer facilities
- Accommodating same-sex provision for women whose faith requires them not to have exposure to a male person who is not a relative

Key Objectives

- Gather local information on who uses council services and the impact on different racial groups, disabled people and men and women, including transsexual men and women.
- Consult employees, service users, trade unions and other stakeholders and involve disabled people on the equality plan and actions.
- Assess the impact of our policies and practices in relation to age, religion, belief and sexual orientation.
- Promote equality training in relation to age, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

Section 12 Have your Say on the Equality Plan and Actions 2009 – 2012

The draft Equality Plan and actions 2009 – 2012 is out for consultation for a 6 week period September to October 2009.

It is available bilingually on the Council's website: www.sirddinbych.gov.uk or www.denbighshire.gov.uk. We have sent out a press release and information to key stakeholders. We will also be using our internal communication channels to make sure Council employees give us their views.

If you have comments to make in respect of the Equalities Plan and actions, we would welcome your feedback by: Friday 6 November 2009.

Contact: Corporate Equalities Officer, Denbighshire County Council, Strategic Policy Unit, County Hall, Wynnstay Road, Ruthin, Denbighshire, LL15 1YN
Telephone: 01824 706161 email corporate.improvement@denbighshire.gov.uk

This document is available in other languages and/or formats





Equality and Diversity Consultation and Involvement

We are always interested to hear from local people who want to be actively involved with our work in Equality and Diversity.

If you would like to send your comments, be consulted in future or become a member of a forum on how equal opportunities can be addressed in council services, please provide us with your contact details.

Name	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Address	
Email	
Telephone Number(s)	
Fax	

Please return this form using the Freepost address below:

**Denbighshire County Council
Freepost RLYH-KRTA-XBTA
Karen Beattie
Corporate Equalities Officer
Strategic Policy Unit
County Hall, Wynnstay Road
Ruthin LL15 1YN**

Appendix 1
Appendices

Appendix 1	Consultation and Involvement Form
Appendix 2	Consultation Feedback – What you told us
Appendix 3	Corporate Equalities Action Plan 2009 – 2012