Draft Document

Shared Equality Objectives

A collaborative working project between North Wales Public Sector organisations.
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Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 came into effect in October 2010. The new Act places a General Duty on listed public bodies which requires them, when carrying out their functions (and on other persons when carrying out public functions) to have due regard to:

– The need to eliminate conduct which the Act prohibits;
– The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
– The need to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not.

In April 2011 the Welsh Assembly Government exercised its powers to introduce Specific Duties and these are set out within the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. The Regulations have been introduced to help public authorities in Wales better perform the General Duty (You can see the full list of duties from the link given in Appendix B).

Under these Regulations, all public sector organisations in Wales are required to identify and publish strategic equality objectives by 2nd April 2012. These objectives must be based on relevant information held within each organisation and by other relevant parties. It must also take account of any national data or research including, for example, the Equality and Human Rights Commission report “How Fair is Wales”.

This document sets out the shared equality objectives for public authorities in North Wales.

About the Group

Equality leads in all six North Wales Local Authorities, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, National Parks Authority and North Wales Police have shared good practice for many years. With the introduction of the new legislation, these organisations have been working collaboratively under the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network, (the Network) to advance the equality agenda and to tackle issues on inequality that cut across the public sector throughout North Wales.
Introduction

About the Shared Objectives
An extensive search of reports and recommendations around inequalities has been undertaken by members of this group, in order to examine and explore the detailed data which has led to the development of shared objectives.

We have also developed a number of Action Areas, that underpin our shared equality objectives, that we believe will help to address the inequalities identified.

Detailed planning within member organisations will then identify the actions necessary to fulfil these equality objectives.

We fully subscribe to the philosophy of “Nothing about us without us”, and we believe it is vital to involve and engage a range of stakeholders across North Wales, including those who represent people from each of the protected characteristics, to ensure we tackle the issues which are relevant in North Wales today.
How we developed our objectives

During 2011 the network has conducted joint activities to develop a set of shared objectives which every partner has signed up to. These are:

1. Reduce Health inequalities
2. Reduce unequal outcomes in Education to maximise individual potential
3. Reduce inequalities in Employment and Pay
4. Reduce inequalities in personal Safety
5. Reduce inequalities in Representation and Voice
6. Reduce inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment

Developing the Objectives
The following simple model was used to develop these objectives and to take into account various requirements of the Specific Duties.

National Research
National research is important in providing a starting point for identifying inequalities in North Wales. Primary research is time consuming and resource intensive and tends to be the province of academics, government departments and the larger third sector organisations. Wales and UK research can often be difficult for individual public sector organisations to access. As a partnership, we have drawn together some of the key issues and conclusions of a range of national research in recent years. A list of reports which have informed our work is presented in Appendix A.
How we developed our objectives

Local Information
Local information held by each public authority has also informed our thinking. Much of this information is useful in answering questions such as ‘are the national trends reflected in my area?’, and in enabling the identification of local issues which may not be recognised nationally. We have identified a range of areas where the current range of available local information is inadequate and more needs to be developed.

Information from Engagement
The Regional Stakeholder Meeting was held on 20th September 2011 in the Conwy Business Centre which engaged a range of organisations working across North Wales. Feedback from this event will be used to inform the Strategic Equality Plans of the individual public authorities that make up the Network. These plans are due to be published on 2nd April 2012. The event was inclusive and accessible to everyone who has an interest in this work but it was only the start. We will continue to involve people throughout the life of our plans drawing on the experience of a wide range of stakeholders to inform our detailed actions and judgements about whether we have succeeded and what more needs to be done.

Action Areas
Each objective has an accompanying set of Action Areas which are detailed below. Action Areas give definition to the six objectives and provide the basis from which each partner has planned their contribution to the achievement of the six objectives.

Different partners have agreed to contribute to different Action Areas. These contributions will be monitored and measured using individual action plans and performance measures drawn up by each partner.

Action Areas for each objective are described below. A summary of the research, and information from engagement along with any data development issues which we intend to pursue, can be found in our Background and Research document.
Objective One: Reduce Health inequalities
If…

Action Area 1.1 The number of people, in under-represented groups\(^1\), choosing healthy lifestyles increases

AND

Action Area 1.2 The number of people, in under-represented groups, accessing health care services increases

AND

Action Area 1.3 The care of older people is improved to ensure they are treated with dignity and respect

AND

Action Area 1.4 The uptake of preventative health care services by Gypsies and Travellers increases

AND

Action Area 1.5 Transgender and Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people are treated with dignity and respect when receiving care

AND

Action Area 1.6 The needs of people with poor Mental Health and Learning Disabilities are better understood

…then inequalities in health will have been reduced.

\(^1\) See Glossary of Terms in Appendix B
Objective Two: Reduce unequal outcomes in Education to maximise individual potential
If…

Action Area 2.1 The educational attainment gap\(^2\) between different groups reduces

AND

Action Area 2.2 Identity based bullying in Schools reduces

…then unequal outcomes in Education will have been reduced allowing people to maximise their individual potential.

Objective Three: Reduce inequalities in Employment and Pay
If…

Action Area 3.1 Inequalities within recruitment, retention, training and promotion processes are identified and addressed

AND

Action Area 3.2 Any pay gaps between different protected characteristics are identified and addressed

…then inequalities in employment will have been reduced.

Objective Four: Reduce inequalities in personal Safety
If…

Action Area 4.1 The reporting of hate crime and harassment increases and steps are taken toreduce incidents of hate crime and harassment

AND

Action Area 4.2 The reporting of domestic abuse increases and steps are taken to reduce domestic abuse

…then inequalities in personal safety will have been reduced.

\(^2\) See Glossary of Terms in Appendix B
**Objective Five: Reduce inequalities in Representation and Voice**

If…

**Action Area 5.1** Decision making bodies become more representative of the communities they serve

AND

**Action Area 5.2** Consultation and Engagement is improved through strengthening links between the Public Sector and local and national groups representing people from all protected groups

…then inequalities in representation and voice will have been reduced.

**Objective Six: Reduce Inequalities in Access to information, services, buildings and the environment**

If…

**Action Area 6.1** Access to information and communications and the customer experience improve

AND

**Action Area 6.2** Physical access to services, transport, the built environment and open spaces improve

…then inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment will have been reduced.
Appendix A – Research Papers and Reports

2008-based Local Authority Projections Stats Wales (2010)
A Simple Cure: A National report into deaf and hard of hearing people’s experiences of the NHS
All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools Welsh Government (2009)
Annual Population Survey (2011)
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2011)
EHRC Wales Publications;
in particular An anatomy of economic inequality in Wales WISERD for EHRC Wales (2011)
  Wales Triennial Review ‘How Fair is Wales EHRC Wales (2011)
  Who Runs Wales? EHRC Wales (2011)
and Better Public Services: Plugging the Gaps EHRC Wales (2009)
Disability Poverty in Wales, Leonard Cheshire Disability (March 2011)
Experiences and Expectations of Disabled People A research report for the Office for Disability Issues
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people in later life Stonewall/YouGov (2011)
North Wales Police Annual Policing Plan Performance Summary, (updated monthly)
Streets Ahead Campaign Report Disability Wales (August 2009)
E. Sibley , Towards and Inclusive Health Service: A research Report into the availability of Health Information for blind and partially sighted people, (2009)
UK Triennial Review ‘How Fair is Britain?’ EHRC (2010)
Welsh Health Survey (2009)
Vikki Butler, Young people’s experiences of, and solutions to, identity related bullying: Research report Barnardos (2009)
Equality and Human Rights Commission, Hidden in Plain Sight, Report from the Inquiry into Disability related harassment
Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Attainment Gap
The difference between the average examination results (in any given assessment) of one protected group compared with another.

Harassment
Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

Hate Crime / Hate Incident
The Association of Chief Police Officers distinguishes between a hate incident and a hate crime. A hate incident is:
“Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”
Whilst a hate crime is defined specifically as:
“Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”

North Wales Local Authorities
There are six local authorities in North Wales. They are Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council.

"Nothing About Us Without Us!"
Is a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by that policy.

Protected characteristics
These are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Protected Groups
People sharing one or more protected characteristic.

Public authority
Organisations and individuals that carry out public functions - this would include government departments, local authorities, health authorities and hospitals, schools, prisons, and police for example.

Public sector equality duty (General Duty)
The duty on a public authority when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.

Public sector equality duty (Specific Duties Wales)
Public authorities in Wales have to comply with a set of Specific Duties which are designed to assist them in meeting the General Duty. Information on the full list of Specific Duties can be found at: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/guidance-on-the-equality-duty-for-the-welsh-public-sector/

Stakeholders
People with an interest in a subject or issue who are likely to be affected by any decision relating to it and/or have responsibilities relating to it.

Under Represented Groups
Refers to situations where the numbers of people with a protected characteristic are disproportionately low (e.g. in the workforce or among service-users) compared to their numbers in the population. Which groups are under represented varies from issue to issue can change over time. In some cases work is ongoing to determine which groups are under represented by collecting data about numbers in the population and numbers taking up a particular service or belonging to a decision making body.