

# Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024



## **The Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024**

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg. Os ydych yn darllen y fersiwn ar lein, defnyddiwch y ddolen "Cymraeg" ar ochr dde'r bar uchaf. Os ydych yn darllen copi papur, defnyddiwch y manylion cyswllt ar i gael copi o'r fersiwn Gymraeg os gwelwch yn dda.

This document is available in Welsh. If you are reading the online version, please use the "Cymraeg" link on the right hand side of the top bar. If you are reading a paper copy, please use the contact details below to obtain a Welsh version.

### **Accessible Formats**

This document and supporting documents will be published on the Council's website in Welsh and English formats as standard. Other accessible formats including: large print; Braille; British Sign Language DVD; easy-read; audio and electronic formats; and other languages; will be available upon request.

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## **About Wrexham County Borough and the people that live here**

Wrexham County Borough lies in the North East of Wales and about 136,000 people live here. We have the large urban areas of Wrexham town (the largest town in North Wales) and Wrexham Industrial Estate, alongside rural areas such as the Ceiriog Valley in the south-west, the Maelor in the south-east and former mining villages to the south and west of Wrexham town. The Welsh language and culture is a distinctive part of the fabric of some communities – with 14% of people living here being Welsh speaking, and a further 14% having some Welsh speaking ability.

In Wrexham town-centre, a range of work is going on to regenerate the town in terms of shopping, living and cultural events. However, some of our urban areas remain amongst the most deprived in Wales.

Our county borough has 68 schools and over a third of people working here do so in the public sector (for example in local government, schools, hospitals or doctors' surgeries). Manufacturing is also important, 20% of jobs in our county are in this category and Wrexham Industrial Estate is one of the largest in Europe.

The average age of someone living here is 42 years, over a quarter of us are in the 45 to 64 years age group and there are approximately 1,500 babies born in the County Borough each year – with slightly more boys born than girls. There are slightly more men than women living here overall. There is no reliable data about the size of the county borough's population identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual, however between 2012 and 2017 the proportion of this population in Wales increased from 1.3% to 2.5%. We do not have any information on gender reassignment.

The most recent figures available (from the 2011 Census) showed that just under 50% of the population were married, with 0.1% in a registered same sex civil partnership, same sex marriage being legalised after this in 2013.

At the time of the last Census in 2011 the White British ethnic population made up 93.1% of the population of the county borough, with all other ethnicities together accounting for 6.9% of the population; 6.3% stating they were born outside of the UK. In 2011 63% of people stated their belief as Christian, with 2% stating other religions. Taking into account migration flows within the European Union, the county borough's status as a dispersal area and the Syrian resettlement scheme, it is highly likely that the percentage of residents in the county borough born outside of the UK, and those of other ethnicities (other than White British) has continued to increase since 2011. We know there are over 70 different languages spoken in the area.

Data from 2017 suggests that across North Wales 77,000 (18.7%) of people aged 16 – 64 are disabled people, however we do not have these figures for just our area. We do know that approximately one-in-five people living here have a limiting long-term illness.

Further information about the demographics of the population of the County Borough are contained within Appendix A.

## **Making life fair**

Being equal means making sure that life is fair for everyone. The Equality Act is a law to make sure everyone has the same chances. A Duty is something the law says we must do. All public bodies must think about treating people from different groups fairly and equally. This is called the Equality Duty.

Under the Equality Duty, in our functions as a local authority, we need to:

- Make sure that people are treated fairly and do not experience discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Give special thought to make life more fair for everybody and ensure everyone has opportunities; and
- Help people who are different from one another to understand each other

There are some groups who are sometimes treated less fairly than most. These groups need special thought to make life fairer. These are defined as people with 'protected characteristics' within the Equality Act, and are:

- Sex – men and women
- Disability – disabled people – including those with mental health problems
- Age – people of different ages – young people or older people
- Race – people who come from other cultures – who may live in a different way or have a different skin colour
- Religion or belief – people of different religions – or who have no religious beliefs
- Pregnancy and maternity – women who are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Sexual orientation – lesbian women, gay men and bisexual men and women
- Gender reassignment – transgender people – people who are born as one sex and want to live as the other sex

In addition, we must also consider what we can do to make our services more helpful to poorer people. This is because many of the disadvantages the Equalities Act seeks to address, are often made worse if you are poor, or can cause people to be poorer. This is covered under another duty called the Socio-Economic Duty.

## **Our Strategic Equality Plan**

This Strategic Equality Plan is the means by which Wrexham County Borough Council has published its Equality Objectives as required by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

For us as a local authority, the law and duty applies to those who work for us and those who use our services. Every four years we have to prepare and publish equality objectives, or aims, which will help us to progress in making sure that everybody is treated fairly.

This Strategic Equality Plan outlines what our objectives are for the next four years – these are those areas we will focus on improving and which we believe will have the most benefit to you – helping to ensure we provide equality of opportunity and inclusion for all protected groups.

In addition to these specific objectives we also have six council priorities – these are the services we will be focussing most on improving and which we believe will have the most benefit to you. To ensure that these services, and all the other things the council delivers, are as fair as possible we carry out Equality Impact Assessments which help us determine the possible impacts of our decisions and help us do things in more equal ways.

## **Underpinning processes**

Our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process includes a combined screening and assessment tool which is available online and on paper. It includes the identification of positive impacts as well as potential negative ones and the format enables electronic links to relevant consultation and other relevant documents. It also includes an integral review process for updating EIAs following implementation of decisions. Completion of an EIA is a requirement of all decision-making reports and summaries are published as part of the reports and as such are published on the Council's website. Elected members can access full EIAs electronically with hard copies available on request to all. The responsibility for ensuring EIAs are completed rests with Chief Officers and the council's equality arrangements are subject to audits which will provide independent assurance on the effectiveness of our arrangements.

Knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties will be promoted to our workforce and Councillors through a combination of more Equality Impact Assessment training, more general equality training, and specific role related training. Training will be delivered via a combination of e-learning, face to face workshops and written briefings as appropriate. The annual staff Performance Review and Development process also includes equality and diversity awareness as a standard requirement. Guidance documents are also provided to support our equality processes including in relation to procurement.

We need to understand who uses (or would potentially use) our services, including any under or over representation of groups with protected characteristics who use them. We encourage our services to use available data including customer feedback; survey equality information; information from Equality Impact Assessments and other national, regional or locally available data to inform changes. In addition, potential

community tension information is collated and reviewed centrally and where necessary multi-agency action is co-ordinated. Relevant available equality monitoring information including that collected through engagement will be published within an annual equality report which will also include workforce equality monitoring information along with information on any potential identified pay differences.

Responsibility for the delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan lies with the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team.

Elected Members have responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan and ensuring equality impacts are given due regard when making decisions about Council business.

The Lead Member whose portfolio includes equality gives overarching support to the development and delivery of the plan.

## **How we have developed our plan**

During 2019 we carried out a lot of research, reviewed our previous equality objectives and considered data and evidence from national reports, North Wales information and localised information. The analysis undertaken, suggested a number of areas that our objectives could focus on.

In order to test these proposed equality objectives and see if they were issues which people recognised as needing addressing, we engaged with representative groups of those with protected characteristics (as defined under the Equality Act). We also asked what actions we could take and if there were any other things they felt we should focus on. This was promoted through direct contact with 25 representative groups, engagement with individuals within specific communities and through focus groups. Overall there were 11 responses to the online survey (seven groups / organisations and four individuals representing over 2,000 people, one email response and one request for a meeting (representing visual impairment). In addition to this, engagement also took place with refuges and asylum seekers on two separate occasions, visits to members of the Portuguese community, visits to members of the Polish community and a meeting with the Traveller Forum Group (Young People).

A workshop with elected members was carried out to consider the objectives from their knowledge of the people living within their wards, and also to test the objectives against the 'five ways of working' as set out within The Well-being of Future Generations Act. We wanted to ensure our objectives are focussed on the right things and that the way we deliver these services will mean they are sustainable for the future.

The consultation told us that in the main the areas we were considering could be areas of inequality, however, some of these were things that the Council could not have much influence over, or work to address any inequality was already underway by

ourselves as part of our council priorities, by our partners – for example, health partners or the work of the Wrexham Public Services Board. We did not wish this plan to duplicate the work of others, but to add value and make a real difference to people's lives.

More information on the Council Plan can be found here: [The Council Plan](#) and on the Wrexham Public Services Board website here: [Wrexham Public Service Board](#).

We also found we needed to be more specific in our objectives – therefore this helped us to refine and really focus our objectives on the things that we as a local authority can really make a difference to. A summary of findings from all the consultation can be found in Appendix B and information on how the equality objectives changed as a result of this can be found at Appendix C.

Actions were then developed to outline how we will achieve the objectives, and performance measures developed to show how we will know that what we are doing is working – these are shown in the information about each objective.

## **Our equality objectives**

The next section outlines each of our equality objectives, why they are important to us, what we will focus on, and what success will look like.

Our objectives for 2020-2024 are:

- Close attainment gaps in education (with a specific focus on achievement of boys, accessibility of school buildings and supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children to achieve their potential)
- Engage with those seeking and providing employment in the County Borough to help increase the number of disabled people accessing employment opportunities and raise awareness of the pay gaps for this group
- Improving the accessibility of the Council
- Involving all and ensuring that we use information about those who use our services, including those with protected characteristics, to make good decisions
- Promote and celebrate the ethnic diversity of our communities ensuring they are inclusive and welcoming
- Supporting diversity in local democracy
- Improving diversity and addressing any pay gaps in the Council's workforce

## **Objective 1:**

### **Close attainment gaps in education.**

#### **a) Support schools to increase the performance of boys in all key stages**

The performance of boys and the variation compared to the performance of girls in Wrexham County Borough Council is broadly similar to the Wales average in all key stages up to key stage 4. The variation is greater at key stage 4.

There is a greater gap between the performance of boys and girls at key stage 4, with boys performing less well than girls. Schools in Wrexham County Borough Council will be supported to further improve the performance of boys and in particular to attain the higher outcomes/ levels at the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and 3 and the Capped 9 point score at Key Stage 4.

#### **Our focus for 2020-24**

The focus for 2020-24 will be to ensure that schools are supported in developing teaching and learning strategies and to ensure that curriculum design and offer is appropriate to local need, through implementation of the revised curriculum from September 2022.

#### **What success looks like**

- There is improved attainment of boys at all key stages and therefore reducing the variation between boys and girls.

#### **How we will measure our success**

- Reduced variance between Boys and Girls Capped 9 score
- Reduced variance at the core subject indicator between Boys and Girls at Key Stage 3
- Reduced variance at the core subject indicator between Boys and Girls at Key Stage 2
- Reduced variance between Boys and Girls at the Foundation Phase Indicator at Foundation Stage

#### **b) Undertake upgrades to school buildings to ensure accessibility for all**

In 2017/18, we surveyed the accessibility and condition of all of our school buildings in terms of the condition of the fabric of the buildings (categorised A – D) and their compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Our Education Asset Management Plan (2019-2025) addresses the findings of the survey and has been written in line with the School Organisation Framework (2017-2025) and the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme.

Band A of our 21st Century Schools Programme (2015-19) addressed all of our schools which were categorised 'D' and our focus through the delivery of Band B (2019-2024) is now on improving those schools which are categorised 'C'.

Planned upgrades to school buildings in Wrexham County Borough are carried out in accordance with all relevant building regulations to ensure ongoing accessibility for learners and where the site permits, schools should be meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Where the requirements are not met, we must ensure that each school also holds an individual site specific Accessibility Plan that would include any mitigation required at a school level.

### **Our focus for 2020-24**

Further improve our Education estate through the successful delivery of the 21st Century Schools Band B programme. This programme includes English and Welsh medium projects, Primary, Faith and Special schools.

### **What success looks like**

- An improved and accessible learning environment is contributing to improved outcomes for all learners.

### **How we will measure our success**

- Increase the number of school buildings which are fully Equality Act 2010 compliant
- Ensure that all schools have current accessibility plans in place – reviewed annually
- Increase the number of schools with a condition category of A or B

#### **c) Support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils to access the curriculum.**

Estyn has reported that while the performance of Gypsy / Gypsy Roma pupils across Wales has shown a trend of improvement at both key stages 3 and 4 since 2011, their performance is still well below the national average by around 16 points. In the main key indicator at key stage 4 (level 2 inclusive of English/Welsh and mathematics) Gypsy / Gypsy Roma pupils are the lowest performing ethnic group in Wales, performing notably lower than the national average of 59%.

Supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils to access the curriculum will ensure this group reaches their full potential.

The number of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in Wrexham is low - in 2019/20 there were 68 school age children and we were involved in supporting 49.

## **Our focus for 2020-2024**

Improve attendance/achievement and consequently lower exclusions through collaboration with a range of agencies to enhance the service for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and families.

Work with the data team in Education to provide data to track attainment and challenge/support schools to have high expectations of Gypsy, Roma Traveller pupils.

Continue to develop our outreach learning hub based at Ruthin Road Traveller Site which aims to bridge the gap between home and school.

Develop early years outreach provision to help prepare pupils for starting school.

Develop alternative curriculum packages and extend our outreach focus to secondary education.

Involve the Traveller Forum Group (Young People) in our service design and delivery.

### **What success looks like**

- There will be increased attendance and lower exclusions of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils.

### **How we will measure our success**

- Improved attendance of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils
- Reduced exclusions of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils
- Establishment of an outreach service focused on early years provision
- Establishment of an outreach service focused on secondary provision

## **Objective 2:**

**Engage with those seeking and providing employment in the county borough to help increase the number of disabled people accessing employment opportunities and raise awareness of the pay gaps for this group.**

Data from 2018/19 shows that across Wales, the unemployment rate for disabled people (8.8%) is over twice the rate for non-disabled people (3.7%). However, 2017/18 data shows that across North Wales, Wrexham has the highest percentage of apprenticeships with disabled learners (where disabilities affect learning).

The council encourages, promotes and assists employers to engage with those further away from employment via the Wrexham Employer Pledge - maximising employment and training opportunities for young people and adults across the county borough. This will complement and enhance the new directive from Welsh Government to focus on job seekers with disabilities. Whilst the employer pledge is generic, we have the ability to use it in a focused way.

Approximately 150 companies and organisations have signed the Pledge committing to helping people better understand the world of work through talks, site visits, jobs fairs and advising on skills requirements with the companies providing work placements, mock interviews and work experience opportunities. We work in partnership with a range of other support agencies including DWP (Department of Work and Pensions), Agoriad, Cyfle Cymru, CAIS, Remploy, HMP Berwyn, Coleg Cambria, Careers Wales, Prince's Trust, Business Wales, Glyndŵr University and Communities For Work to facilitate introductions and promote opportunities for employers and support organisations to come together to help individuals into work.

Additionally, many of these support organisations - particularly DWP and Communities for Work will promote the Employer Pledge to companies that they are working with - DWP and Remploy are currently promoting the Disability Confident approved status with local employers and have encouraged a number to sign up to the pledge.

### **Our focus for 2020-2024**

Work in partnership with other organisations to enhance employment opportunities for disabled people – for example Remploy, Cyfle Cymru and Job Sense.

Ensure that externally funded employability programmes (such as Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus and Legacy Fund) support disabled people or people with work limiting health conditions to move into employment, in line with Welsh Government direction. It should be noted that these employability programmes are grant funded and could change during the period of this plan.

To engage directly with prospective / current employers to raise awareness of opportunities to maximise employment for local people, including disabled people and / or people with work limiting health conditions, and issues that affect this group such as pay gaps.

To help facilitate training / awareness raising for other organisations by signposting them to specialist support providers who could deliver the training.

### **What success looks like**

- An increase in the number of job outcomes from the Communities for Work Plus programme being individuals with a disability or work limiting health condition – increasing from 16% (2019/20) to a minimum of 20% over the four years until 2024.
- Improved awareness from employers about the needs of job seekers who have a disability or work limiting health condition.
- In the longer-term a decrease in the unemployment rate of disabled people.
- An increase in the amount of organisations signing up to the Employers Pledge.

### **How we will measure our success**

- 20% of Communities for Work Plus job entries being individuals with a disability or work limiting health condition
- Number of organisations on the Employers Pledge
- Number / value of Community Benefits secured via Employer's Pledge relating to reducing inequality

## **Objective 3:**

### **Improving the accessibility of our council.**

Wrexham Council has an important role as a community leader and we need to ensure that our own practices promote equality of opportunity – both as a service provider and an employer.

Our Council Plan 2020-23 commits us to becoming a more modern and resilient council. To do this we will be delivering a 'Modern Ways of Working' programme which will include adopting new technology and digital solutions. In 2020 we launched our new fully accessible website and some 65 of our services are now available / delivered digitally. Our new ICT & Digital strategy will set out how we will continue to use the potential of digital technology to transform the way the council works – in developing and delivering this strategy we will need to ensure that we engage and support all people in our communities to be able to access our services.

We need to ensure that we are well placed to meet the new accessibility standards for public sector bodies and ensure that any documents we publish electronically are accessible to as wide an audience as possible. Accessibility means more than putting things online. It means making our content and design clear and simple enough so that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those who do need to adapt things.

#### **Our focus**

We will map those in our communities who may be digitally disadvantaged, will ensure that the development and delivery of our new ICT & Digital Strategy addresses this and will ensure that we consult with groups / individuals with protected characteristics. We will support our workforce with appropriate training to meet accessibility standards when producing information about our services electronically and will review the information we already publish to ensure it is accessible.

#### **What success looks like**

- There are services available to support those who are digitally disadvantaged and they are able to access the services they need, in a way that is right for them.
- More of our electronic information is fully accessible.
- Greater satisfaction for customers in terms of accessing council services.

## **How we will measure our success**

- Agree our ICT and Digital Strategy
- Map people who may be digitally disadvantaged (including groups / individuals with protected characteristics)
- Identify staff who prepare information for electronic publication and deliver appropriate training
- Review our website portals and prioritise for accessibility compliance

## **Objective 4:**

### **Involving all and ensuring that we use information about those who use our services, including those with protected characteristics, to make good decisions.**

As a council, we provide services to people who live, work and visit here. It is important that the decisions we make will not negatively affect people with protected characteristics in a different way to the rest of society. We need to make sure that we give everyone the opportunity to be heard, and that decision-makers have good access and an understanding of this information.

We have made significant progress in improving consultation and engagement with the public in recent years, and have been commended by Wales Audit Office for work in this area. We have an online consultation and engagement hub – ‘Your Voice Wrexham’ – shared with Public Services Board partners, have increased the number of consultations conducted and numbers of responses, and have increased our interaction with the public through social media and other online platforms.

In order to create the circumstances where we can more closely align the people who are involved in our service planning with the demographic profile of the county borough, we need to do more work to analyse who gets involved, who does not and why not.

We need to support our services to gather and make use of information about the people who use our services, including those with protected characteristics, when reviewing and designing services and we need to empower those who make decisions to understand and take account of this information.

#### **Our focus for 2020-2024**

We will review our Involvement Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that it reflects our Strategic Equality Objectives.

We will review and continue to improve the Equality Impact Assessment process, taking account of emerging Socio Economic Duty guidance and continue to work with services via the Equalities Improvement Group to improve the use and quality of our assessments.

We will continue to raise the profile of the Involvement Strategy and the Consultation and Engagement Toolkit with services, supporting them to analyse data in the context of protected characteristics and make use of this in their Equality Impact Assessments.

We will use the findings of the survey of elected members' understanding of Equality Impact Assessments carried out in 2020 to design and deliver appropriate training and support.

We will review the equality profile of respondents to corporate consultations and identify gaps in representation to help us develop means of providing appropriate involvement opportunities for those with protected characteristics.

We will work to develop more contact with groups and individuals who have protected characteristics. We will establish a directory of contacts and support services, and will make use of this when undertaking Equality Impact Assessments and involvement and co-production work.

### **What success looks like**

- Respondents to corporate consultations will be more closely aligned with the demographic and equality profile of the county borough.
- Services will be supported to have a better understanding of the people who use their services, including those with protected characteristics
- Services will be able to engage with groups and individuals with protected characteristics to help them provide services which consider equality.
- The quality of our Equality Impact Assessments will continue to improve.
- Our elected members will have a better understanding of equality data and how to take account of it when taking decisions about our services.

### **How we will measure our success**

- Review our Involvement Strategy and Action Plan
- Review respondents to corporate consultations in 2019/20 and 2020/12 to identify areas of under-representation
- Increase number of consultation and engagement activities undertaken through Your Voice Wrexham and aim to reduce the variance in representation of groups / individuals with protected characteristics in comparison with the demography of the county borough
- Establish directory of contacts for groups or individuals with protected characteristics for use with consultation and Equality Impact Assessments
- Equalities training available for and attended by elected members

## **Objective 5:**

### **Promote and celebrate the ethnic diversity of our communities ensuring they are inclusive and welcoming.**

Much of the latest reliable data regarding the County Borough's population is from the 2011 Census which found that the White British ethnic population made up 93.1% of the population, with all other ethnicities together accounting for 6.9% of the population – with 6.3% stating they were born outside of the UK. Taking into account migration flows within the European Union, Wrexham County Borough's status as a dispersal area, and the Syrian resettlement scheme; it is highly likely that the percentage of residents in the County Borough, born outside of the UK, and those of other ethnicities (than White British) has continued to increase since 2011.

The County Borough is the smallest of four asylum seeker dispersal areas in Wales, meaning at any one time around 150 people seeking asylum are living in the borough through this scheme. In 2015 Wrexham County Borough committed to welcoming Syrian refugees through the 'Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme'. Under this programme, 17 families have been resettled in the county borough, totalling 75 people (as at end December 2019). This programme was merged with others in 2020 forming a Global Resettlement Scheme which resettles refugees from a wider area.

North Wales Police records show that there were 221 recorded hate crimes in Wrexham County Borough during 2018/19. This is a 33.9% increase from the 165 recorded hate crimes in 2017/18.

Whilst increases in hate crime over the last five years has been impacted by improvements in crime recording by the police, there have been spikes in hate crime following certain events such as the EU Referendum and the terrorist attacks in 2017. The majority of hate crimes in England and Wales were race hate crimes, accounting for around three-quarters of offences.

#### **Our focus for 2020-2024**

- Engage directly with communities to gain a better understanding of lived experience and what issues if any they are facing with a particular interest in emerging Brexit related community tensions, hate crimes.
- Signpost people to additional help in relation to settled status and encourage integration between different communities.
- Utilise Home Office funding to continue to help Syrian and other future refugees settle in local communities and provide signposting and support to access additional help as well as support / activities to encourage integration between different communities (the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme – VPRS).
- As part of the VPRS scheme, arrange accommodation for refugees arriving through the scheme, organise multi-agency support for the resettlement process,

ensure educational places are available for school age children and provide opportunities and support adults to learn the English language to a level where they can gain sustainable employment and create a secure future for themselves.

- Organise a programme of events / activities across North East Wales that will promote integration between groups and help develop and maintain good community relations (e.g. projects with schools on diversity and hate-crime and local and regional events and communications to commemorate and support national campaigns e.g. Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's day, Hate Crime Awareness Week, Anti-Slavery day, Gypsy and Traveller History Month, Refugee Week, etc).
- Continue to meet our statutory duty by working as part of the Community Safety Partnership (CSPs) to address local issues of Crime and Disorder, including hate related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Through our community tension and hate crime monitoring process engage with partners and where appropriate adopt a multi-agency response to identified tensions surrounding ethnic minority groups.
- Contribute to a public engagement plan, developing meaningful consultation with our communities on their feelings of safety in the County Borough. Where specific issues are identified in relation to hate crime, recommendations will be shared with the CSP and addressed through specific and measurable actions within the 'Safer Neighbourhood' priority.

### **What success looks like**

The aim of this objective is in line with the Home Office's Integration Framework (2019) to have 'communities where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities'. Specifically:

- Refugees on the resettlement scheme will be able to build new lives and secure a sustainable future in Wrexham County Borough
- There will be good community relations and integration between groups
- Better understanding of where EU national and other BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) communities are living in order to support and engage with them
- Brexit related community tensions are identified and actions put in place to minimise these
- A reduction in the number of hate crimes
- An increase in victim confidence / satisfaction

### **How we will measure our success**

- Map out where EU national and other BAME communities are living and which grass roots organisations support them (engage with third sector and partners to do this)

- Work with key partners to look at how existing and new programmes become more inclusive to all
- Establish new, and enhance existing, reporting processes (informal and formal) to identify emerging Brexit related tensions (Share this information at regional Tactical Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring group)
- Number of events / activities organised across North East Wales to promote integration between groups and help develop and maintain good community relations
- Number of VPRS refugees attending ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes (% attending)
- Percentage of VPRS children of school age attending appropriate full-time education (target 100%)
- Numbers of VPRS refugees (adults) accessing employment, training or education (other than ESOL)
- Contribute to a public engagement plan and develop meaningful consultation with our communities on their feelings of safety in the County Borough
- Number of recorded hate crimes
- Victim (of hate crimes) confidence and satisfaction

## **Objective 6:**

### **Supporting diversity in local democracy.**

In Wales, the Welsh Government is committed to increasing diversity across all aspects of public life. This includes tackling the barriers which prevent individuals' active participation in local democracy through standing for elected office. The Welsh Local Government Association and the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, together with local authorities, are working to address these barriers and increase opportunities for under-represented groups to play a full role in supporting and representing their communities.

In Wrexham, for the Council term 2017-22, 42 (80.7%) of elected members are male and 10 (19.2%) are female. This is in comparison with a male / female split of 50.2% and 49.8% across the county borough.

13% (7) of our elected members are aged 25-44, 44% (23) are aged 45 – 64 and 40% (21) are aged 65+. There are no elected members aged 16-24. This is contrast to the profile of the county borough where 25% of residents are aged 25-44, 27% are aged 45-64 and 20% are aged 65. (Figures correct as at 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020.)

We do not currently hold any additional information about the profile of our elected members.

While the electorate will decide on their representatives, to create the circumstances to more closely align the demographic profile of elected members with the demographic profile of Wrexham County Borough, we need to increase our knowledge of the characteristics of those who choose to stand for elected office, and where possible, of those who choose not to.

#### **Our focus for 2020-2024**

We will work with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) to develop and deliver programmes to increase the diversity of candidates for the local government election in 2022.

We will promote and deliver these programmes in a way that is accessible for groups with protected characteristics.

We will survey our elected members to increase our knowledge about the diversity of the Council and review what information is available about candidates for the 2017 local government election to help inform this work.

We will undertake a survey of the characteristics of candidates for the 2022 local government election to establish baseline data going forward.

### **What success looks like**

- There will be an increased number of candidates, with an increased diversity of characteristics, for the local government election in 2022, which will increase the diversity of elected members for the 2022 – 2027 term of office.
- We will have improved information about the characteristics of those who stand as candidates for local government in 2022, as well as those who choose not to, in order to refine our focus for increasing the diversity in democracy in the 2027 election.

### **How we will measure our success**

- Compile available information about the candidates in 2017 local government election
- Survey of current elected members for protected characteristics
- Deliver pre-election programmes to increase the diversity of candidates for the 2022 election
- Increase the number of candidates for 2022 local election
- Survey candidates for 2022 local government election for protected characteristics
- Improve the profile of Wrexham County Borough Council to be more closely aligned with the demographic profile of the County Borough

## **Objective 7:**

### **Improving the diversity and addressing any pay gaps in the council's workforce.**

Wrexham Council has an important role as a community leader and we need to ensure that our own practices promote equality of opportunity – both as a service provider and employer.

Approximately 5,240 people (including those working in schools) are employed by us. As one of the largest employers in the county borough, it is important that we ensure that our own policies support diversity and equality of opportunity in our workforce. At the present time, a high proportion of the workforce (generally 70%+) choose not to disclose personal information in relation to diversity monitoring and this impedes our ability to identify areas on which we might need to focus. We recognise that we need to build a culture where individuals feel able to declare a protected characteristic, either online using our HR system or by other means of data collection.

Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission advises that we must have due regard to the need to address the causes of pay differences that seem reasonably related to any of the protected characteristics.

#### **Our focus**

We will work to improve the timeliness and quality of our own workforce data, using a variety of means to encouraging more of our workforce to provide equality data, to enable us to establish a meaningful baseline.

We will continue to annually review any gender pay gap and by improving the quality of our workforce monitoring data we will increase our ability to analyse pay gap data in relation to other protected characteristics.

We will use this information to identify areas to improve and develop plans and actions to address these.

We will develop our use of equality data to enable us to monitor who applies for our job vacancies and consider how we promote opportunities for employment with the council, to redress under-representation in our workforce.

#### **What success looks like**

- Council employees are better supported in terms of any specific needs they have (relating to the protected characteristics) as there is better awareness and understanding of the workforce.

- The workforce of the council better reflects the demographic profile of the county borough and is reflective of people living here.
- We continue to strive to be an organisation that provides employees with equality of opportunity, recognising and valuing that everyone makes a different but important contribution.
- We maintain a framework of modern workforce policies, procedures and initiatives to ensure fairness, consistency and equality of opportunity for our employees and potential employees.
- We ensure that equality and valuing diversity is at the heart of our policies, working practices and employee development.
- Any gender based pay gap will be reviewed and better understood. Appropriate work will commence to address this gap and other pay gaps where relevant.

### **How we will measure our success**

- Improve the timeliness of data in relation to the protected characteristics of our workforce (publish within 6 months of the end of the year)
- Improve data collection in relation to the protected characteristics of our workforce and undertake regular and differentiated communication with the workforce to encourage submission of equality data
- Develop web recruitment reporting for job applicants by protected characteristic and where there is evidence of under representation consider actions to redress difference
- Identify pro-active steps through workforce planning messages and analysis of workforce data in service, to identify and prioritise areas for action
- Review approach to workforce monitoring to complement equality reporting
- Reviewed and address the causes of pay differences related to gender and any of the other protected characteristics

## **How we will measure how we are doing overall**

To check we are on track to achieve our objectives we will measure how well we are doing at least twice per year, and we will report on this to our Executive Board and to you, as part of our reporting against our Council Plan priorities.

Every year we will also provide an annual report against this Strategic Equality Plan outlining how well we are delivering our objectives and any changes to our plans. This will be reported to the council's Executive Board and also made publicly available.

The table below shows a summary of what we will be reporting on and any targets we have set.

## Measures and Milestones

### Objective 1:

#### Close attainment gaps in education

#### Chief Officer Education & Early Intervention

##### a) Support schools to increase the performance of boys in all key stages

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
Reduce variance between Boys and Girls Capped 9 score	2018-19 LA (Boys) = 312.6 LA(Girls) = 358.2 Variance = 45.6	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys
Reduce variance at the core subject indicator between Boys and Girls at Key Stage 3	2018-19 LA (Boys) =82.9 LA(Girls) =90.6 Variance = -7.7	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys
Reduce variance at the core subject indicator between Boys and Girls at Key Stage 2	2018-19 LA (Boys) = 85.7 LA(Girls) =93.4 Variance =-7.7	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys	Reducing variance through improvement of performance of boys
Reduce variance between Boys and Girls	2018-19 LA (Boys) =76.2	Reducing variance	Reducing variance	Reducing variance	Reducing variance

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
at the Foundation Phase Indicator at Foundation Stage	LA(Girls) =89.3 Variance =-13.1	through improvement of performance of boys			

**b) Undertake upgrades to school buildings to ensure accessibility for all**

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
Improve number of school buildings which are fully Equality Act 2010 compliant – Primary (58)	Compliant = 32 Non-compliant = 11 Partially compliant =15	Not reporting	Improve 1 Partially compliant school to be Compliant	Improve 1 Partially Compliant school to be Compliant	Compliant – 34 Non-compliant – 11 Partially compliant – 13
Improve number of school buildings which are fully Equality Act 2010 compliant – Secondary (9)	Compliant = 5 Non-compliant = 1 Partially compliant = 3	Improve 1 Non-compliant school to be Partially compliant	Not reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting
Improve number of school buildings which are fully Equality Act 2010 compliant – Special (1)	Partially compliant = 1	Not reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting	Improve 1 school to be Compliant
Ensuring that all schools have current accessibility plans in place – reviewed annually	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Increase the number of school buildings with a condition category of A or B  Primary (58)	Category A = 7 Category B = 30 Category C = 22	Not reporting	Increase Category A +1 school Increase category B +2 schools	Increase Category A +1 school	Not reporting
Increase the number of school buildings with a condition category of A or B  Secondary – 9	Category A = 4 Category B = 0 Category C = 1	Increase category B +1 school	Not reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting
Increase the number of school buildings with a condition category of A or B  Special – 1	Category C =1	Not reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting	Increase category A +1 school

**c) Support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils to access the curriculum.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Improve attendance of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils	2018/19 67.7%	Improve	Improve	Improve	Improve
Reduce exclusions of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils	2018/19 Fixed term exclusions = 5 Number of days = 11 Permanent exclusions = 1	Improve	Improve	Improve	Improve
Establish Outreach service focused on early years provision	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Establish Outreach service focused on secondary provision	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

## Objective 2:

Engage with those seeking and providing employment in the county borough to help increase the number of disabled people accessing employment opportunities and raise awareness of the pay gaps for this group.

### Chief Officer Housing & Economy

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
20% of Communities for Work Plus job entries being individuals with a disability or work limiting health condition.	Current performance is 16% of job entries	20%	20%	20%	20%
Number of organisations on the Employers Pledge	N/A	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
Number / value of Community Benefits secured via Employer's Pledge relating to reducing inequality	N/A	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch

**Objective 3:  
Improving the accessibility of our council**

**Chief Officer Governance & Customer / Chief Officer Finance & ICT**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
ICT & Digital Strategy agreed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mapping of people who may be digitally disadvantaged in (including groups / individuals with protected characteristics)	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting
Identify staff who prepare information for electronic publication and deliver appropriate training	N/A	Reporting	N/A	N/A	N/A
Review our website portals and prioritise for accessibility compliance	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

**Objective 4:**

**Involving all and ensuring that we use information about those who use our services, including those with protected characteristics, to make good decisions.**

**Chief Executive**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Involvement Strategy and Action Plan Reviewed	N/A	N/A	Reporting	N/A	N/A
Review respondents to corporate consultations in 2019/20 and 2020/21 to identify areas of under-representation	N/A	Establish baseline	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Reduce the variance in representation of groups / individuals with protected characteristics in comparison with the demography of the county borough	N/A	Establish baseline	Reduce	Reduce	Reduce
Establish directory of contacts for groups or individuals with protected characteristics for use with consultation and Equality Impact Assessments	N/A	Reporting	Maintain	Maintain	Maintain

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Increase number of consultation and engagement activities undertaken through Your Voice Wrexham	N/A	Establish baseline	Increase	Increase	Increase
Equalities training available for elected members	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

## Objective 5:

**Promote and celebrate the ethnic diversity of our communities ensuring they are inclusive and welcoming.**

### Chief Executive

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
Map out where EU national and other BAME communities are living and which grass roots organisations support them (Engage with third sector and partners to do this)	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Subject to additional funding	Subject to additional funding
Work with key partners to look at how existing and new programmes become more inclusive to all	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Establish new, and enhance existing, reporting processes (informal and formal) to identify emerging Brexit related tensions (Share this information at regional Tactical Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring group)	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Hate Crime Awareness Training delivered in schools for management, workforce and pupils.	tbc	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Number of events / activities organised across North East Wales to promote integration between groups and help develop and maintain good community relations	Hate Crime Awareness Event (Ty Pawb – October 2019)	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Number of VPRS refugees attending ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes (% attending)	35 100% of adults able to attend	Sustain 100%	Sustain 100%	Sustain 100%	Sustain 100%
Percentage of VPRS children of school age attending appropriate full-time education (target 100%)	100%	100% Sustain	100% Sustain	100% Sustain	100% Sustain
Numbers of VPRS refugees (adults) accessing employment, training or education (other than ESOL)	12	Improve	Improve	Improve	Improve

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Contribute to a public engagement plan and develop meaningful consultation with our communities on their feelings of safety in the County Borough	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Number of recorded hate crimes	221 North Wales Police 2018/19 (annual data)	Reduce	Reduce	Reduce	Reduce
Victim (of hate crimes) confidence and satisfaction	New measure – currently establishing baseline	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

**Objective 6:  
Supporting diversity in local democracy**

**Chief Officer Governance & Customer**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Survey of current elected members for protected characteristics	This will provide the baseline for the 2022 local government election.	Reporting	Not reporting	Reporting	No

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Deliver pre-election programmes to increase the diversity of candidates for the 2022 election	N/A	Not reporting	Reporting	Not reporting	Not reporting
Increase (a) number, and (b) diversity of candidates for 2022 local election	Establish baseline – compile information about 2017 candidates (gender/age)	Establish baseline	Not reporting	Reporting (May 2022)	Not reporting
Survey candidates for 2022 local government election for protected characteristics	This will provide the baseline for the 2027 local government election.	Not reporting	Not reporting	Reporting (May 2022)	Not reporting
Improve Profile of Wrexham County Borough Council more closely aligned with the demographic profile of the County Borough	Profile of current Council	Not reporting	Not reporting	Reporting (May 2022)	Not reporting

## Objective 7:

Improving the diversity and addressing any pay gaps in the council's workforce.

### Chief Executive

Indicator	Our baseline information	Year 1 2020-2021	Year 2 2021-2022	Year 3 2022-2023	Year 4 2023-2024
Improve timeliness of data in relation to the protected characteristics of our workforce. Welsh Government requires that data is published within 12 months. Our latest published data is therefore 31 March 2019 (published March 2020).  Publish required workforce data within 6 months	31 March 2019 (published March 2020)	31 March 2020 data published by September 2020	31 March 2021 data published by September 2021	31 March 2022 data published by September 2022	31 March 2023 data published by September 2023
Improve data in relation to the protected characteristics of our workforce - Undertake regular and differentiated communication with workforce to encourage submission of equality data.	2018/19 workforce data (published March 2020)	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Our baseline information</b>	<b>Year 1 2020-2021</b>	<b>Year 2 2021-2022</b>	<b>Year 3 2022-2023</b>	<b>Year 4 2023-2024</b>
Develop web recruitment reporting for job applicants by protected characteristic for the year 2021/22	Not currently collected	Not reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Establish actions in relation to any identified underrepresentation in job applications by those with protected characteristics	Not currently collected	Not reporting	Not reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Undertake an annual review of actions to address gender pay gap and other protected group pay gaps in response to the annually available workforce data.	Gender Pay Gap 2017/18 – Median pay gap = 14.7 2018/18 – Mean (average) pay gap = 5.1	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting
Publish an action plan in respect of gender pay as required by the public sector equality duty.	N/A	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting	Reporting

## Appendix A

### What we know about Wrexham County Borough's population in terms of the protected characteristics

#### Age

Age profiling data is published annually by the Office of National Statistics. The median age in Wrexham County Borough is similar to that for Wales as a whole, two years greater than the median for the UK.

Area	Median age
Wrexham County Borough	42.2
Wales	42.5
UK	40.1

Below is a profile of the age distribution in Wrexham County Borough as at June 2018, showing the number of people in each age group.

Age	Population	Percentage
0-15	26,251	19.28%
16-24	12,684	9.32%
25-44	33,581	24.67%
45-64	36,651	26.92%
65+	26,959	19.8%

#### Disability

Data from the Annual Population Survey 2015-2017 suggests that across North Wales, 77,000 (18.7%) of people aged 16 – 64 are disabled (based on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability, however no lower geographical breakdown is available).

#### Long term illness

The number of people living with limiting long-term illness in Wrexham County Borough grew from 27,550 in 2001 to 27,900 in 2011. In 2011, those with limiting long-term illness made up 20.7% of the population, compared to an all Wales figure of 23.7%. The number of people with limiting long-term illnesses in Wrexham County Borough is predicted to rise by about 5,700 between 2015 and 2035.

## **Gender Reassignment**

There is currently no information on gender reassignment.

## **Pregnancy and Maternity**

The general fertility rate (GFR) is defined as the total number of live births born to females who are of childbearing age in a population, i.e. those aged between 15 and 44 years. This rate provides a useful indicator when studying population growth and change. The GFR across Wales and the UK has been slowly rising since 2001/2002. It has been postulated that this upturn has been largely driven by increasing birth rates among older women.

The North Wales GFR is slightly higher than the Wales rate (61 per 1,000 compared to 60 per 1,000), but closely reflects the Welsh pattern.

The GFR across BCUHB ranges from 54 per 1,000 females in Gwynedd to 72 per 1,000 females in Denbighshire, which is the highest rate in Wales.

There were just over 1,600 live births in Wrexham in 2014. The GFR for Wrexham is 65 per 1,000 females, which is statistically significantly higher than Wales.

## **Race and Ethnicity**

Much of the latest reliable data regarding the profile of Wrexham County Borough's population is from the 2011 Census, at which date about 94.7% of people in the County Borough identified as having a national identity solely attached to UK nations (Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British).

There is no historical data to compare how this changed over time prior to 2011, however, in 2001 2.5% of the resident population of Wrexham County Borough were born outside of the UK, compared to 6.3% in 2011. Taking into account migration flows within the European Union, Wrexham County Borough's status as a dispersal area and the Syrian resettlement scheme, it is highly likely that the percentage of residents in Wrexham County Borough, born outside of the UK, has continued to increase since 2011.

In 2011 the White British ethnic population made up 93.1% of the population in Wrexham County Borough according to the Census, with all other ethnicities together accounting for 6.9% of the population. Again, it is likely that ethnicity percentages have experienced considerable change since 2011.

Ethnic group	Percentage of population
White British	93%
Other white	4%
Other ethnic group	2%
Mixed ethnic group	1%

### **Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

Wrexham County Borough is the smallest of four asylum seeker dispersal areas in Wales, meaning at any one time around 150 people seeking asylum are living in the borough through this scheme.

In 2015 Wrexham County Borough committed to welcoming refugees through the 'Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme'. Under the Syrian resettlement programme, 17 families have been resettled in the county borough, totalling 75 people. Wrexham County Borough's commitment is to take up to 20 families by the end of March 2020 and it is planned to resettle a further 3 families by then.

The current scheme is due to end on 31st March 2020, when the government plans to amalgamate three schemes (including the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme) into a single Global Resettlement Scheme which will resettle refugees from a wider area.

### **Gypsy Travellers**

A Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count takes place twice-yearly in every local authority. This sets out the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on authorised and unauthorised sites.

46 caravans were identified in Wrexham County Borough in January 2019 and 40 in July 2019. The number of travellers has been relatively consistent over the past five years.

## Welsh Language

The National Survey for Wales 2018/19 identified 18% of the population of Wales as Welsh speakers, with 15% having some Welsh speaking ability. In Wrexham, the proportion of Welsh speakers is 14%, with a further 14% having some Welsh speaking ability.

Area	Welsh speakers	Some Welsh speaking ability	Cannot speak Welsh
Wrexham County Borough	14%	14%	73%
Wales	18%	15%	67%

## Religion and belief

The most recent data available to us (ONS Census 2011) shows that 63% of the Wrexham County Borough population described themselves as Christian, with 27% stating they had no religion, 2% other religion, and 8% providing no response.

In 2011, 63% of Wrexham County Borough's population described themselves as Christian, with 27% stating that they had 'no religion'.

Religion or belief	Percentage of population
Christian	63%
No religion	27%
No response	8%
Other religion	2%

## Sex

There are slightly more females than males in Wales – this is as would be expected, as women tend to live longer than men, however in Wrexham County Borough there are slightly more men (50.2%) than women (49.8%).

Area	Male	Female
Wrexham County Borough	50.2%	49.8%

Area	Male	Female
Wales	49.3%	50.7%

## Sexual Orientation

Between 2012 and 2017, the proportion of Wales' population identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual increased from 1.3% to 2.5%, however there is no reliable data about the size of Wrexham County Borough's gay, lesbian or bisexual population.

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

In 2011, just under 50% of the population were married, with 0.1% in a registered same sex civil partnership. (Same sex marriage was legalised in 2013.) 10% of the population was divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which has been legally dissolved, and 2% identified as separated (but still legally married or in a same sex civil partnership).

Marital status, Wrexham County Borough (2011 Census)	Percentage
Single (never married or never registered a same sex civil partnership)	32.6%
Married	47.8%
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	0.1%
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same sex civil partnership)	2.0%
Divorced or formerly in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	10%
Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership	7.4%

## Appendix B

### Strategic Equality Plan 2020/24 – Draft Equality Objectives

#### Consultation Findings and Analysis

##### Introduction

Consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020/24 ran for just over six weeks during December 2019 and January 2020.

An email with a link to an on-line survey was sent to 25 groups representing over 2000 people with protected characteristics. The email also gave an offer to meet with groups to talk to them about the objectives and receive their feedback directly. A reminder was sent to these groups following the Christmas period.

##### Organisations contacted as part of Equality Objectives engagement

Organisation	Protected characteristic
AVOW (+ member organisations)	All
BAWSO	Race and Ethnicity
Christians Together in Wrexham	Religion or belief
Dynamic	Disability
Glyndwr Chaplaincy	Religion or belief
North East Wales MIND	Disability
PISC (Polish Community Group)	Race and Ethnicity
CLPW (Portuguese community group)	Race and Ethnicity
School Councils	Age
Tangnefedd (North East Wales Interfaith Forum)	Religion or belief
Unique Transgender Network	Gender reassignment
Vision Support (Wrexham Centre)	Disability
VIVA LGBT	Sexual orientation/Gender reassignment
Wrexham Over 50's Forum	Age
Wrexham Islamic Cultural Association	Religion or belief
Wrexham Senedd Yr Ifanc (Young People's Parliament)	Age
International Drop In Centre (Just Across)	Race and Ethnicity
DEWIS Independent Advocacy Scheme	Disability
Health Visitors, Midwives	Pregnancy and Maternity

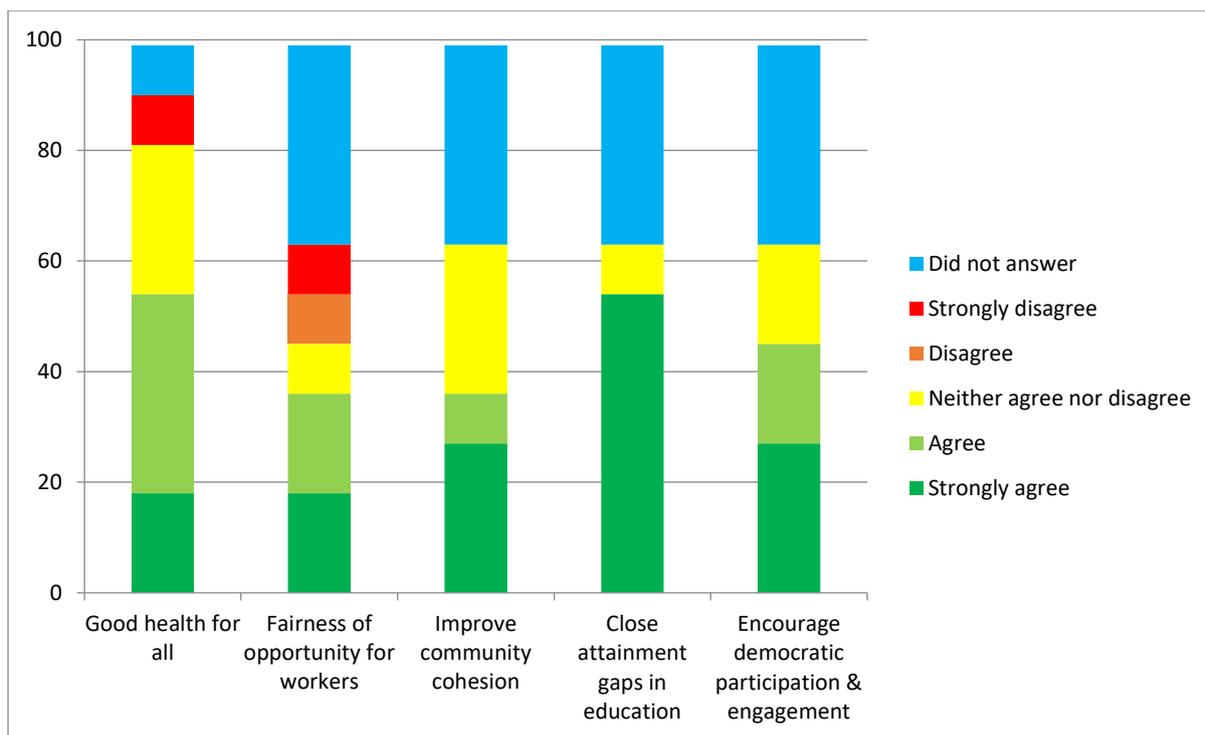
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Protected characteristic</b>
IPAC Options	Pregnancy and Maternity
International Christian Fellowship Wrexham	Race and Ethnicity
Advance Brighter Futures	Disability
Cais	Disability
Deafness Support Network	Disability
Domestic Abuse Safety Unit	Race and Ethnicity

In total, there were 11 responses to the online survey (seven groups / orgs and four individuals) – however they all did not answer every question / complete the survey), one email response (representing Wrexham Anglican Churches), and one request for a meeting (via Vision Support – seven attendees). In addition to this, engagement also took place with refugees and asylum seekers on two separate occasions (at the ‘Just Across the Road’ drop-in centre – 18 people), visits to members of the Portuguese community, visits to members of the Polish community and a meeting with young people from the Traveller Forum Group.

The council’s Elected Members attended a workshop to discuss the equality objectives (23 attendees), they were also considered by the council’s Customer, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

## **Findings**

The survey asked respondents to rate how strongly they agree / disagree that the objective will address any inequality for them. The graph below shows the percentage of respondents agreeing / disagreeing with each objective:



Draft Strategic Equality Objective	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Did not answer
Good health for all	18	36	27	0	9	9
Fairness of opportunity for workers	18	18	9	9	9	36
Improve community cohesion	27	9	27	0	0	36
Close attainment gaps in education	54	0	9	0	0	36
Encourage democratic participation & engagement	27	18	18	0	0	36

‘Close attainment gaps in education’ had the highest percentage of respondents strongly agreeing with it (54%), followed by ‘encourage democratic participation and engagement’ and ‘improve community cohesion’ both with 27%. Combining strongly agree and agree shows education still with the highest percentage in agreement (staying at 54%) and with ‘Good health for all’ also at 54%.

The survey and meetings then asked for comments about each objective and actions that could be carried out to achieve them. The following information is a combination of all responses (online and meetings) by objective.

## **Objective 1 – Good health for all**

### **Feedback from those with protected characteristics was that:**

- More funding is needed for mental health care and support for children, young people and adults
- Mental health services should be available to all – not have to meet thresholds
- More respect and awareness of conditions and mental health
- Substance misuse issues also need considering
- Obesity is an important issue in the county borough
- Access to doctors is difficult for those with no fixed abode – especially for mental health support (this was a particular issue for the Gypsy and Traveller community)
- Consider issues of isolation when considering health
- Information on how to access services needs to be available in a variety of formats for those with disabilities (this was a particular issue for those with sight loss)
- Hidden disabilities like mental health and depression are not recognised – basic training and awareness is needed to be able to deal with it better
- Health needs are being met and there has been no experience of any discrimination (comments from refugees and those from non-British countries of origin)
- Good health: it is imperative that none should be discriminated against in this area and everything is done to see that health care provision is good for everyone in the county borough – working in partnership to support facilities in Caia Park would ensure greater equality for this area going forward
- The general upgrading of GP surgeries across the town would also support this objective and take some pressure off A&E at the hospital.

### **Suggested actions from those with protected characteristics were to:**

- Provide more information on services available from the council in libraries
- Reinstate the Family Information Service in the library (for people to access early help and information)
- Require all employers and schools in the area to provide a basic introduction to recognising mental health conditions and supporting those with them (including signposting to professional help)
- Invest and reorganise to provide an integrated approach that eradicates silos and where there is a united vision by services to help people
- Subsidise shops/outlets providing healthy whole food alternatives, promote healthy eating in schools and limit fast food outlets
- Details of the services available and how to access them should be made available in an easy to understand document
- Early interventions looking for the root cause are needed

- Ensure consistency between postcodes and accessibility
- A wider awareness of Gypsy and Traveller culture for agencies and easier referrals processes - many gypsy travellers do not read or write. Equal rights/treatment for Gypsy Travellers for their health needs
- Focus on access to services and availability of information in accessible formats - consider alternatives for those who can't see

### **Feedback from Elected Members:**

Members discussed the impacts of socio-economic disadvantage and deprivation on health and also highlighted that some of the challenges may relate to lifestyle issues. They felt that the council could focus on combatting loneliness and isolation and take a lead in improving health – for example to address smoking by young mothers, encourage breast-feeding, have healthier school meals and remove vending machines; and to address issues with the standard of private sector housing.

### **Discussions at the scrutiny committee:**

Scrutiny Committee members commented on the potential connections between health and housing, that life expectancy may be linked to the county's industrial past and that mental health may be an issue for these adults. They also commented that carers may be isolated and also have mental health issues.

## **Objective 2 – Fairness of opportunities for workers**

### **Feedback from those with protected characteristics was that:**

- There is not much support in some areas for adults with disabilities or chronic conditions – employers, especially the council, need to fund adaptations and have a good understanding of disability (or mental health issues)
- Within the private sector they may be aware of their legal duties but it is rare that any monitoring will occur. The council should take the lead on monitoring - in particular the pathway to employment available for young people leaving school
- Travellers are discriminated against when applying for jobs
- Mainstream employment is not always possible for those with disabilities. There needs to be more awareness training and experience in placing and employing disabled people in work
- Equality of opportunity for workers to include those who have served custodial sentences or have a criminal record, to have the opportunity to settle back into society
- Support for homeless people to find work
- Advanced English qualifications are costly but needed to obtain higher paying jobs (when English is an additional language)

- Opportunities for work in the county borough were good when compared to other nationalities' countries of origin.

**Suggested actions from those with protected characteristics were to:**

- Provide courses for WCBC and other employers around disability, mental health awareness and equality legislation
- WCBC could facilitate training / awareness raising for other organisations - or facilitate the joining up of organisations with Vision Support, who could deliver the training
- Ensure adaptations are made for those of particular religions or cultural backgrounds as well as those with disabilities and chronic health conditions to enable them to work
- Provide support and guidance to businesses, acting as 'critical friend'. Private sector also to be 'critical friend' to Local Authority.
- Fine companies found to be discriminating against Gypsy Travellers and enable easier ways to report discrimination in workplace.

**Feedback from Elected Members:**

There was broad support for this objective and support for the council contributing to this by offering employment opportunities for people with disabilities, as part of its work in supporting people with physical and learning disabilities to increase their independence. They also suggested we need to ensure our recruitment processes are accessible and promoted to people with protected characteristics, that there is equality of opportunity and that we need more timely information about our own workforce.

Scrutiny Committee members felt that the council cannot influence other organisations' practices around these issues and it is not our place to do so. They suggested that further data should be sought on the profile of council employees with regard to their protected characteristics.

**Objective 3 – Improve community cohesion**

**Feedback from those with protected characteristics was that:**

- The council's Community Cohesion Team supports this well but other services need to be involved too e.g. police officers need time to get to know their communities
- Celebrating different cultures/festivals/religions etc. can raise understanding and help reduce prejudice and fear – people need to feel welcome and safe
- More working together is needed to reduce prejudice – this will help change the stigma about disability and mental health

- Gypsy Travellers suffer a large amount of hate crime
- Guide dogs have been targeted in the past
- Some people with disabilities (e.g. vision impairments) do not feel safe in town at night (community policing helps to counteract fears)
- Need to know where to go to report any incidents of hate crime
- There is support for facilities from other organisations and a permanent police presence in some areas of deprivation
- No one felt that racial identity presented any challenges in their neighbourhoods. They felt the community was friendly (comment from refugee group)
- Generally feel accepted in communities – although there were a couple of incidences of verbal abuse and hate crime reported
- There needs to be respect for people in our society whatever their racial background or beliefs. This is better achieved by supporting faith groups and churches as part of public life, valuing their contribution rather than regarding faith as purely private and personal. The more people see people of different faiths and backgrounds playing their part in society, the greater their understanding and respect.

**Suggested actions from those with protected characteristics were:**

- More funding for the Community Cohesion Team and other local services
- Provide schools with the opportunities and materials to be able to instil understanding in children from an early age that our differences are to be celebrated, not feared or disparaged
- Hold different events in the town to celebrate important cultural events etc. Possibly some media involvement
- Address inequalities around the homeless community and the way in which they are perceived
- Promote what 'community cohesion' means in an easily understood definition
- Wider culture awareness in schools/youth groups PSHE lessons
- Use adverts and posters about racism related to Gypsy Travellers
- Make it easier to report incidents.

**Feedback from Elected Members:**

There were differences of opinion as to whether cohesion and hate crime was an issue in all wards. There was a feeling tolerance levels were lower concerning young people's behaviour. There were examples, where cohesion issues had been a result of people thinking others get preferential treatment. It was felt this was everyone's problem, not just the council, and agencies should work together to address this. Members expressed concerns that Syrian refugees may not receive enough support or know where to go to get this. Some actions suggested were to better promote the definition of equality, to link in more with Community Councils, and to better prepare people for housing tenancies.

Scrutiny Committee members gave mixed views as to whether hate crime was a problem in their own wards, but there was support for this objective.

## **Objective 4 – Close attainment gaps in education**

### **Feedback from those with protected characteristics was that:**

- If all these things are done as listed education (and the long-term impacts) in the area would benefit hugely
- There is limited support for children and young people who have English as a second language and the additional support needed for parents is almost non-existent
- Provide a wider curriculum with more subjects. This was highlighted particularly for the Gypsy and Traveller community who would like more subjects / courses that would complement boys' traditional careers following their fathers' careers; as well as college courses available before 14
- It is not about building accessibility - it is about an accessible curriculum, awareness of teachers, extra time for exams etc. - not just about getting through the door - needs to be widened out (not all disabilities are to do with wheelchairs)
- Also need to consider 'invisible' disabilities e.g. hard of hearing - hearing loops etc.
- Employment for visually impaired people is low, even for those with higher qualifications than a full-sighted person
- There is a good team of teachers for the visually impaired in Wrexham
- Education – boys appreciate healthy competition, physical activity and practical skills
- The educational and support needs of themselves and their children were met and people don't feel they experience any discrimination (comment from those from non-British country of origin).

### **Suggested actions from those with protected characteristics were to:**

- Consider encouraging local businesses to sponsor activities at nearby schools
- Following the Estyn report, the Senedd yr Ifanc should be permitted to debate the whole issue of education in the County
- More disability support for those going through school - they shouldn't have to struggle through school with no diagnosis and it not be picked up until university level
- Widen the focus from accessibility in general - not just getting into buildings

### **Feedback from Elected Members:**

Members commented around the achievement of boys and queried whether this is an issue across the whole county borough and whether low attendance was a cause – they highlighted that prevention was needed and that pupils and families need to be 'school ready' before starting. They supported improving accessibility to buildings, however commented that funding may be an issue. Members queried whether the objective about supporting minority ethnic learners was needed as they weren't aware of evidence to support this need and believed these learners usually excel. It was felt there could be less focus on academia and more on trades.

Scrutiny Committee members agreed with the objectives around boys and accessibility to schools, however queried whether there was data to show a need to focus specifically on ethnic minorities. They commented that hidden disabilities and children with additional needs could be an area of focus.

## **Objective 5 – Encourage democratic participation and engagement**

### **Feedback from those with protected characteristics was that:**

- On-line consultation only reaches a small percentage of the population and is not a statistical reflection of the population of the whole county borough.
- Consultations need to be in languages other than English or Welsh to reach the 10% of Wrexham's population who don't have English or Welsh as a first language
- More face-to-face consultation is needed within communities / places where people go
- More people in the council should know how to deal with different diversities – be more empathic and understanding
- Councillors should meet with their constituents to get feedback
- Support faith groups and churches as part of public life, valuing their contribution
- Appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss these objectives
- Democratic process should be more broad / diverse – more people with protected characteristics should be involved – more information on this is required in accessible formats

### **Suggested actions from those with protected characteristics were to:**

- Provide an occasional newsletter / magazine for all households outlining events, consultations etc. Utilise schools to share information
- Increase face to face consultations using existing meeting places such as Doctors' surgeries, school gates, bus station, hospital waiting rooms, supermarkets, canteens in offices and factories
- Provide employees with more knowledge about disabilities, especially frontline staff
- Need wider understanding of consultations amongst all communities

- Councillors should meet with their constituents to get feedback
- Provide more information on how to get involved in democratic process - tell people clearly in accessible formats
- Consultation - continue to consult regularly and widely to ensure we are aware of the minds of people in our wards/county borough and not being influenced by the 'noisy few'
- Publish profile information about respondents to all consultations as a comparison to the population profile data for the whole County Borough

### **Feedback from Elected Members:**

Members commented that it is difficult for working age people to become Councillors – there are issues around workload (if this is in addition to other employment) and salary levels being insufficient as a sole income. They also commented that more women need to be encouraged to be a Councillor and the council should find out why they do not put themselves forward for nomination to become one. It was suggested that more communication needs to take place to inform people about the role of Councillors and that this needs to be done well in advance of elections to allow people to make plans. In terms of consultation, Members felt this should not be done solely online as this prevents some groups of people from taking part. It was felt more could be done to encourage others to take part (e.g. more face-to-face meetings); however the costs of doing so was prohibitive.

Scrutiny Committee members agreed that consultation should be expanded and the methods used should be widened.

### **Anything missing / any other comments:**

#### **Feedback from those with protected characteristics:**

- Small practical changes can make a big difference – e.g. info to local shops regarding accessibility (no path too narrow, no items up high), re-open public toilets, online questions page whereby residents could send in questions to the council in connection with their circumstances or problems and be guaranteed an answer (makes people feel empowered, respected and more connected to the council)
- Information for the public to know what is currently available/happening as many of the characteristics may not be relevant to them today but could be in the future
- Nominated people available in the contact centre to be able to deal with matters more appropriately – need more people skills and life experience
- Street mess - freedom of opportunity to move around - physical movement. Clutter in streets makes it difficult for those with visual impairment – need a policy on use of 'A' boards

- New developments should talk to groups like visually impaired for advice on crossings / layout etc.
- There are issues with public transport e.g. need accessible information in the bus station (timetables font size / leaflets / screens etc.), accessible transport between hubs, need transport in rural areas and audible announcements on all buses would be useful
- Housing and substance misuse issues – people need to see a way out and a vision for the future and how things could be different
- Information needs to be provided to the public to let them know what is currently available in terms of services / taking place in terms of events and participation opportunities
- There were difficulties with completing the questionnaire due to the technical wording of the questions
- Aware of, and had, support to contact the council for their particular needs (comment from refugees)
- A number of people mentioned difficulties in finding opportunities to speak to English speaking people within the local community in order to practice their language skills – they tended to practice their English skills within their own nationality groups
- Overall, satisfied with Wrexham County Borough as a place to live.

## Profile of respondents

The information below relates to those who completed the 'About You' (demographic profiling) section of the survey, or from individuals (with protected characteristics) consulted with in the community / at meetings. Please note that not everyone answered all of these questions so to ensure no one can be identified these results have been shown as a percentage of those who responded to these questions.

### What is your age?

Age (approximate)	Percentage of respondents
Under 16	8
16-24	6
25-34	8
35-44	23
45-54	19
55-64	15
65-74	4
75+	2
Prefer not to say/No response	15

### What is your gender?

Gender	Percentage of respondents
Male	36
Female	49
Other	0
Prefer not to say/no response	15

### Is your gender identity the same as you were assigned at birth?

Gender identity	Percentage of respondents
Yes	80
No	0
Prefer not to say	20

### Are your day-to-day activities limited?

Respondents were asked whether their day-to-day activities were limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months.

Health problem / disability	Percentage of respondents
Yes – limited a lot	33
Yes – limited a little	50
No	17
Prefer not to say	0

### What is your ethnic origin?

The only respondents (four) who completed this section cited 'white'. The list below shows the country of origin (of those stating this) of people consulted with:

- England
- Ireland
- Libya
- Nigeria
- Poland
- Portugal
- Sri Lanka
- Syria
- Wales

### What is your legal marital or same-sex civil partnership status?

(Please note the response rate to this question was very low)

Marital or civil partnership status	Percentage of respondents
Single	0
Separated, but still legally married	20
Widowed	20
Separated, but still legally in a same sex civil partnership	0
Surviving partner of a same sex civil partnership	0
Married and living with husband / wife	60
Divorced	0
In a registered same sex civil partnership and living with your partner	0
Formally in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	0

## What is your religion?

(Please note the response rate to this question was very low)

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
No religion	20
Buddhist	0
Jewish	0
Sikh	0
Christian (all denominations)	80
Hindu	0
Muslim	0
Any other religion	0

## Appendix C

### Strategic Equality Plan 2020/24 – Draft Equality Objectives

#### How the equality objectives have changed, as a result of the consultation and further research

##### Objective 1 – Good health for all

It was determined that a lot of activity was already ongoing to address any inequality in the areas stated (either by the council, health partners or through the Public Services Board), e.g.

- Low birth weight – Healthy Child Wales programme (Health and Flying Start) Flying Start, Parenting, Children’s social care department work, Help me Quit for baby (Help me Quit, Public Health Wales)
- Childhood health / perception of health and obesity – WCBC services such as Healthy Schools, In2change, Inspire, Info Shop, Sports Development, school holiday food programme, parenting, Team Around the Child (TAC), Family Information Service, Play sufficiency duty; as well as Healthy Child Wales programme (Health and Flying Start), Leisure Services (Freedom Leisure), the Public Services Board Healthy Start Board and the school nursing service (BCUHB)
- Adult obesity – Healthy Wales Strategy, Leisure Services (Freedom Leisure), Sports Development / Club Development, National Exercise on Referral Scheme, Foodwise for Life programme (BCUHB), Corporate Health Standard (WCBC staff), Care First Zest Lifestyle / Corporate Health intranet (WCBC staff), Cycle to work scheme / corporate gym membership (WCBC staff)
- Mental health – Health and well-being days, Inspire, Info shop, schools counselling, school nursing service (BCUHB), TAC, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), mental health services (BCUHB) and Corporate Health Standard, Time to change Mental Health pledge, Mental Health First Aiders and Champions, Care First, occupational health service (for WCBC staff)
- Life expectancy – North Wales Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (Multiagency with service users), Screening for Life programme (BCUHB, specific work done for protected characteristic groups), Help Me Quit programme (smoking cessation - PHW / BCUHB), North Wales Area planning Board work (Alcohol and substance misuse, multiagency), poverty strategy, work with homeless / visible vulnerable, Adult Social Care transformation work, mental health services (BCUHB)

Due to the wide range of work already going on, it was therefore determined that health would not feature as a specific equality objective.

## **Objective 2 – Fairness of opportunities for workers**

Concerns were expressed by both consultee respondents and Elected Members as to what power and influence the council could have over other organisations' pay in order to address any pay gaps in the local workforce. It was commented that the council could be seen as interfering and this may deter businesses from settling in the area which would have a negative impact on local people. It was therefore determined that this element would not feature as a specific equality objective.

There was positive support for developing employment opportunities for disabled workers, and this is something which the council can have an influence on – therefore this has been retained as a specific equality objective: 'Engage with those seeking and providing employment in the county borough to help increase the number of people with disabilities accessing employment opportunities and raise awareness of the pay gaps for this group.'

Queries were raised as to what understanding there was of the demographics of the council's workforce and whether this was representative of the demography of the population of the county borough – therefore this has been split out from the above and retained as a specific equality objective: 'Improving diversity and addressing any pay gaps in the council's workforce.'

## **Objective 3 – Improve community cohesion**

There was some confusion with consultees as to what is meant by the term 'community cohesion', however once explained there was support for this in terms of ethnicity. Therefore this objective has been tightened to 'Promote and celebrate the ethnic diversity of our communities ensuring they are inclusive and welcoming'.

## **Objective 4 – Close attainment gaps in education**

There was support for increasing the performance of boys and undertaking upgrades to school buildings – so both of these remain as part of the 'Close attainment gaps in education'.

Further detailed review of available performance data showed that there was not sufficient evidence to support the need for an objective around 'support minority ethnic learners accessing the curriculum to ensure they reach their full potential'. However, consultation with representatives from the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community highlighted education as an issue for them. Further data showed that the average attainment of this community is less than the national average. Therefore, this has been included within the overall education objective as 'Support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils to access the curriculum to ensure they reach their full potential'.

## **Objective 5 – Encourage democratic participation and engagement by all**

There was a lot of support for consultation and ensuring it is accessible and representative of the population – therefore this has been split out into a separate objective: ‘Involving all and ensuring that we use information about those who use our services, including those with protected characteristics, to make good decisions’.

It was also agreed that the council should try, within its power, to ensure the demographic of its Elected Members was aligned with that of the population, and so this has been included as a separate objective: ‘Supporting diversity in local democracy.’

### **A new objective**

Throughout the consultation some cross-cutting areas (such as accessibility to services) and internal improvements (such as improving the Equality Impact Assessment process and understanding of this) for the council were identified, and therefore these have been included under a new objective ‘Improving the accessibility of the council.’