



**Equality Review Report  
2021/22  
(Year ending March 2022)**

## **Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2021/22**

### **1. Introduction**

This is the City and County of Swansea's Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2021-22. This is our eleventh review under the Public Sector Equality Duty and reflects the reporting regulations for Wales, which were introduced in 2011. The Council adopted a new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 in April 2020 and this is the second year of reviewing this plan.

The review of progress took place between May to July 2022. Departments across the Council, were asked to assess the progress they have made in terms of delivering the steps in our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. They were also asked to review intended outcomes, measures of success and outline future actions for the next two years; 2022-23 and 2023-24 and to map steps in relation to their fit with the Council's Well-being objectives. This information provides a framework and an action plan to monitor the delivery of our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 and our Equality Objectives. All of the information can be found in Appendix 1.

The information will also be used as part of the evidence we will be collecting and analysing for the Council's corporate self-assessment and annual report required under Part 6 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

This report contains details on:

- The eleventh review of progress for our Equality Objectives, and the second year of review for our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24,
- our Corporate work on Equalities including work on our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), the implementation of the Socio-economic duty, Human Rights, Employment and Training data and information and a follow up to our Scrutiny Inquiry Panel into Equalities,
- our consultation and engagement work in relation to Equalities and with people with protected characteristics,
- a series of case studies to highlight our work on Equalities in relation to policy and practice,

We are continuing to build upon our knowledge of data about people with protected characteristics living in Swansea. This year, the first results of the 2021 Census, which included national and local authority area population totals and an age/sex breakdown of the population were published in 2021. This year, we also produced Swansea's Assessment of Local Well-being on behalf of Swansea's Public Service Board. This assessment examines different aspects of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being in Swansea and provides a description of Swansea's demographic profile. Some of the population characteristics include a description of Swansea's population which includes some people with protected characteristics such as Ethnic

Group, Religion and Welsh Language speakers (albeit that this information is somewhat outdated and based on the 2011 Census). More results from the 2021 Census, including data about people with protected characteristics and further information on local population characteristics, will be part of future Census release phases beginning in autumn 2022

## **2. Our Corporate work on Equalities**

This section of the report outlines some of the key developments we have undertaken in relation to our Corporate work on Equalities.

### **2.1 Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA)**

We continue to use equality information to inform our key decision making and policy development process. Last year we revised our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process and developed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process. The purpose of developing an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process was to bring together a range of impact assessment duties into one single coherent framework, in order to reduce duplication and complexity. Our Integrated Impact Assessment was designed to meet the requirements of existing and new Welsh legislation such as the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Well Being Act of Future Generations Act (2015) and the new Socio-economic duty (2021). Our IIA process also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

Our IIA process has been systematically developed to examine whether any new or existing functions, services, policies, procedures, strategies, plans or projects affects any person or group of persons disproportionately. The process has been designed to help decision makers balance the needs of the long term against the immediate pressures of the short term and give decision makers better information about the likely impact of their decision on vulnerable groups. The purpose of our IIA process is to consider whether a proposal balances immediate needs with the well-being of future generations, analyse policies and practices to determine whether they are likely to discriminate or disadvantage people and assess whether proposals will result in any adverse impacts

IAs are an integral part of any decision making process and we aim to undertake them as early as possible during any initiative - ideally at its inception. Our IIA process includes an initial screening form and guidance for staff to use to assess the impact on equalities and a full report and guidance for staff to use when it is required. The Council's Access to Services Team co-ordinates dedicated IIA support by providing information, advice and quality assures all completed IAs.

## **2.2 Implementation of the Socio-economic duty**

The Socio-economic duty has been in place in Wales for just over a year. A number of training and awareness raising sessions on the new duty were held with the Council's Corporate Management Team, Leadership Team, Cabinet, Councillors and staff from a cross-departmental Poverty Forum. E-learning modules have been updated and a new module created on Equalities and IIAs for decision makers and managers. These training modules are mandatory. Work has been completed to review the use of the IIA process with Leadership Team, monitoring the new duty, developing more specialised training on the Socio-economic duty and promoting the new duty through local partnerships such as Swansea's Public Service Board (PSB). Future plans include embedding the new duty in all new strategic documents and within our approach to meeting the new requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act (2021).

## **2.3 Human Rights**

During 2021-22, the Council in partnership with Swansea's Public Services Board (PSB) have been working towards declaring Swansea a Human Rights City. Our Equality and Future Generations Board have appointed a Strategic Equality and Human Rights Co-ordinator to deliver a Strategic Equality and Human Rights Strategy and Action plan working with departments across the Council and other partners. In September 2021, a steering group was established consisting of representatives from each PSB and chaired by the Cabinet Member with the responsibility for Equalities. In October 2021, we developed a survey to explore people's priorities in becoming a Human Rights City and to establish a baseline awareness of Human Rights knowledge and awareness. In November 2021, the PSB Partnership Forum engaged with over 60 representatives from private, public and the Third sector organisations including representatives from different services within Swansea Council to discuss emerging priorities from the survey and to explore how all organisations can work together to become a Human Rights City. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2021, Swansea's Public Service Board declared their intention to become a Human Rights City. Work is currently underway to map existing programmes, policies and areas of work to the emerging priorities for Swansea as a Human Rights City.

## **2.4 Employment and Training Information**

In our role as a major employer in the local area, the Council has continued to support and promote Equalities across our workforce. During 2021-22, we developed a new Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2022-27, which takes into account the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) Act 2017 and is aligned to the Council's Achieving Better Together programme. The new strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with Councillors, Senior Leadership, Trade Unions and engagement with a wide range of staff through workshops and a staff survey. Our Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2022-27 contains a

specific strand for 'Equality in the Workplace' and an objective to 'maintain a culture where equality of opportunity exists for all to fulfil their potential'.

As part of our Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2022-27, a Workforce Equalities Group has been established to explore a range of equalities related issues for our workforce. The group is chaired by the Strategic HR&OD manager and consists of representatives from each Directorate and staff from each of the protected characteristic groups. The group has been working to improve data collection about protected characteristics by reviewing systems to collect data and exploring options to encourage more employees to disclose personal information related to protected characteristics. The group have also worked with a recently appointed Recruitment Specialist to identify potential actions the Council could take to improve its approach to recruitment and ensure that the Council is perceived to be a fair, inclusive and a diverse employer. The Workforce Equalities group will also be working to support the Council to work towards the next higher level accreditation of the UK Government's Disability Confident scheme and to give consideration to the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan and LGBT+ Action Plan as they relate to the Workforce.

This year our Learning and Development Team have reviewed and produced a new Equalities module and developed a new Recruitment and Selection module which aims to ensure that Recruiting Managers consider all equality considerations during the recruitment process. We have also developed e-learning provision on Equalities and Integrated Assessments and have been exploring how to progress training provision for non-IT users on this subject. This year we have also revised the Equal Opportunities form (in line with the Welsh Government template) as part of our recruitment process and have worked with specific teams within the Council e.g the Poverty & Prevention Team to explore how to attract minority groups to apply for jobs during the recruitment process. We have also promoted workshops on 'Unconscious Bias and Cultural Competency' for our staff and explored how to highlight diversity in Council events, news and communications and make best use of diverse job boards. We are continuing to report on the gender pay gap and plan to analyse other pay gaps such as disability and BAME, as well as gender, in future.

## **2.5 Accessible Information**

This year we launched a new and improved Council website in August 2021. Improvements and testing were undertaken with a number of Councillors, members of the Digital Inclusion Working group, staff members and other external groups such as the Parent Carer Forum. We have also consulted with the Disability Liaison Group to identify areas for improvement and further continued work is planned to identify any additional difficulties and to ensure any future developments are co-produced to improve accessibility for a wide range of users' needs. Improvements made included the reformatting of tables and PDFs so that the content is easily accessible and can be found more easily via search engines, the inclusion of descriptive labels on all images, the use of plain English / Welsh and adding a save function on long forms, so that

the user does not lose any information. This year we have also produced further guidance on accessible content and promoted several stories through the Staffnet during the year to highlight accessibility. We have also revised guidance for web editors e.g using tables only when absolutely necessary to display information and regularly update the guidance as new material is produced.

Our new website has been tested via browser extensions e.g Axe which is used by Government Digital Services, and also Silktide. Both have shown a significant improvement, compared to the previous website with most pages meeting AA standard using the W3C 2.1 guidance. The ranking of our website has also improved and increased by 218 places in the most recent Sitemorse report which ranks every English, Welsh and Scottish Councils' websites on accessibility, content/links, code quality, performance and brand. The report was the first since the new Swansea and Abertawe sites went live and we were the second most-improved website behind Tewkesbury.

We have continued to provide a co-ordinated approach to all interpretation and translation, including telephone and face-to-face provision through our memberships of the Wales Interpretation and Translation Service. This does not include in-house Welsh-English translation through our translation unit. As a result of our membership of the WITS partnership, we have a co-ordinated approach to all interpretation and translation, including telephone and face-to-face provision. The top five languages requested in 2021- 2022 were: Arabic, Polish, Kurdish (Sorani), Bengali, Romanian

The Council remains committed to the Welsh Language Standards and has continued to promote and support the use of the Welsh Language. Our Welsh Language Standards Report 2021-22 outlines how we have met these standards and contains examples and highlights of new projects and activities. This report also includes work or actions as a result of any feedback, investigations, or monitoring work by the Commissioner, or as a result of complaints received directly from the public.

## **2.6 The Impact of the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel into Equalities**

A Scrutiny Performance Panel was reconvened in January 2022 to assess the impact of Scrutiny inquiry report into Equalities. The report aimed to identify what had changed since the report was presented to Cabinet, assess whether the agreed recommendations had been implemented and to examine the impact of the Scrutiny inquiry. The report identified a number of significant changes including the development of a new Strategic Equalities Plan 2020-24, the establishment of a new Strategic Equalities and Future Generations Board, a commitment to work towards becoming a Human Rights City and the development of a new Workforce Equalities Group. Overall, the inquiry concluded that we have made good progress in implementing many of the recommendations from the inquiry and the internal focus on equality issues has increased – albeit that the pace of delivery for some recommendations has been hampered, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In terms of implementing the recommendations, during 2021-22 the Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board has continued to meet and work to deliver its priorities and work programme. The Board works to support, monitor and champion equalities across the Council and has appointed a Strategic Equalities and Human Rights co-ordinator to support the delivery of its priorities, including working towards becoming a Human Rights city. Although due to the timing of producing our Strategic Equality plan 2020-24, it was not possible to co-produce the plan, this year we have been working towards our aspiration to co-produce future plans, by working with representatives from the Equality and Human Right Commission (EHRC) Cymru. Our Strategic Equality and Future Generations invited representatives from EHRC Cymru to discuss good practice in relation to equalities work undertaken by other Local Authorities and the wider public sector and to learn about potential future equality issues such as AI and the use of technology. This will inform our approach next year in terms of planning to co-produce a new Strategic Equality Plan for 2025.

The implementation of recommendations relating to our Equality forums and Councillor Champions has been delayed to some extent by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some work has been undertaken with the Council's Leadership Team in terms of identifying priority areas for engagement and to promote wider service level engagement with Equality forums. However, the pandemic has challenged the continuity of the forums and although engagement continued in some instances albeit through virtual or blended approaches, priorities for engagement have been re-focused to respond to the priorities coming out of the pandemic. The Deputy Leader has now taken on "Champions Liaison" as part of his portfolio. Councillor Champions are continuing to work with, advocate and promote equality issues for groups of people with protected characteristics. They cover a wide range of equality issues including; Disability and Access to Services, Diversity, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender), Women, Domestic Abuse, Carers, Poverty, Vulnerable and Older People, Sanctuary and Inclusion, in addition to wider themes such as Health and Wellbeing.

In January 2021, work also continued with a reconvened Staff Equalities group, with new terms of reference, and a closer alignment to the Strategic Equalities and Future Generations Board. This year, the group have been given presentations and discussed easy read/plan English/Welsh and co-production. They have also been given information about Equality Groups and their contacts in Swansea and have been offered opportunities for training in Unconscious Bias, Cultural Competency and Human Rights. Engagement has been identified as a key priority for the Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board going forward.

This year the Co-production Strategy for Social Care was approved by Cabinet July 2021 (this had been co-produced with many carers who are part of the Co-production network). A new Regional Carers Forum was also established in January 2021, building upon the Regional Carers Strategy which was also co-produced and submitted for approval through the Carers Partnership Board and the Recovery Board. Good progress has been made in

relation to reviewing the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy through the development of our Workforce and Organisational Development Policy and the appointment of a Recruitment Specialist. We have also made good progress with reviewing training in relation to equality issues by reviewing an e-learning module on Equalities, the development of an e-learning tool box and actively reviewing records of staff who have completed mandatory equalities training. This year we have also completed a Corporate Co-production Framework and devised and delivered training to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet on Co-production. We have recently secured some funding from our Economic Recovery Fund to commission work about we can support and develop co-production across the Council.

This year we have continued to lead positive campaigns celebrating Swansea's diversity and zero tolerance for discrimination – albeit that there has been some disruption and cancellations or a move to host events on-line events as a result of restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. This year we provided support to major events such as Swansea Pride, the Holocaust and the launch of Human Rights City initiative in Dec 2021. In addition, we have also provided communications support to other Council initiatives which have taken place relating to promoting diversity and zero tolerance such as Domestic Violence.

### **3. Consultation and Engagement**

We are continuing to support our commitment to consultation by involving residents, other stakeholders and employees in our decision making processes. We have revised our approach to consultation and engagement and developed a draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2020-23. The aim of the strategy is to provide a framework for the meeting the Council's consultation and engagement requirements over the next three years and provides guidance to services about when the Council should consult, the level of consultation and engagement required, principles to consider when undertaking consultation and engagement and the use of consultation and engagement results. The strategy has been designed to support, (not to replace), existing statutory and regulatory consultation and engagement processes, long standing consultation and engagement arrangements within service areas, and existing partnership arrangements.

This year, people have had the opportunity to give their views on a wide range of issues including the Council's Budget, future priorities for the Council and Human Rights. People have also been invited to give their views on different aspects of Council services and a range of services have been supported by to develop specific consultation approaches and mechanisms to identify levels of need and demand for services in communities e.g the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA). This year, we also continued with our staff survey to examine levels of jobs satisfaction and employees' perspectives to inform the development of future workforce policies.



### **3.1 Children and Young People**

We have a longstanding history of working in partnership to engage with, and listen to, Children and Young People. Since 2014, the Big Conversation has offered nearly 10,000 children and young people aged 5-25 years living in Swansea, the opportunity to engage and participate in decision making. The Council has a formal policy commitment to Children's Rights and is unique in Wales. We also aim to ensure our work is as inclusive as possible through supporting appropriate participation and engagement of those least likely to engage by providing dedicated support e.g Care Experienced Children and Young People.

As a result of the pandemic, we have reviewed the ways in which we engage with Children and Young People. During 2021-22 we have reviewed our Children and Young People's Rights Scheme and revisited our County wide consultation and engagement mechanisms. This year we have worked with Children and Young People to co-produce a number of indicators to inform the development of Swansea's Children's Rights Scheme based around the five principles of our agreed rights based approach. Work was undertaken with 233 Children and Young People from 11 schools to determine priorities and measures. In addition, we also developed an on-line survey for Children and Young People about Children's Rights and received 358 responses. Feedback from Children and Young People suggested future priorities for focus should include; involving Young People in politics, ensuring LGBTQ+ equality, listening to the collective learner voice, protecting the safety of Young Women in public spaces, protecting the environment and green spaces, listening to quiet voices and supporting Disabled Children to be heard.

During 2021-22, work has also been undertaken by Young People in secondary schools, the Education Directorate and our Democratic Services team, to promote awareness about new legislation which allow young people in Wales to vote from age 16 yrs. This year work has also been undertaken by Young People as Members of the Western Bay Junior Safeguarding Board, to develop a LGBTQ+ resource pack for schools to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues faced by Young People. The Equality-tea resource packs have been distributed to all secondary schools Swansea and supported with additional learning opportunities. Work has also been undertaken to provide engagement opportunities through the development of a Pupil Voice Professional Learning Community and a Pupil Voice Manifesto' for Swansea. This work was led by Bishopston Comprehensive, and was supported by the Education Directorate's Partnership and Involvement Team.

Other examples of engagement work based on Children and Young People's priorities have included workshops with the Police and the Police and Commissioner about Young Women's safety, building in personal safety considerations within existing projects targeted at Young Women such as "Us Girls" and the development of a pilot training project to ensure that Children and Young People with disabilities and additional learning needs can recognise and realise their rights.

### **3.2 Older People (aged 50+ yrs)**

As a result of the pandemic we have also reviewed the ways in which we engage with Older People (aged 50yrs +). In June 2021 we put in place measures to support the development and implementation of Swansea's Strategy for an Ageing Society and to identify areas of need within the Ageing Well agenda. During August to September 2021, we undertook a consultation with Older People (aged 50yrs +) to identify barriers to engagement and their preferred mechanisms for engagement. Around 500 Older People (aged 50 yrs +) participated through community events, face to face discussions and 236 people responded to an online survey. Feedback from Older People (aged 50 yrs+) identified the following priorities; transport, social isolation, active ageing, services, digital equality, information and communication and improving Swansea.

As a result of feedback, regular face to face engagement activities taken place since October 2021 on a weekly basis, to build relationships, reduce social isolation and share information. Activities have included weekly 'walk and talk' sessions weekly 'tea and chat' sessions and a number of events aimed at Older People (aged 50yrs +) with protected characteristics such as the 'Transgender Day of Remembrance' for members of the LGBT community and the Swan Garden Christmas event for members of the BAME community. This year, other community events for Older People (aged 50 yrs +) have included a multi cultural event with the members of the African Community Centre, free boat trips on Copper Jack, and a pilot train travel project for Older People. This year our Winter of Well-being Programme funded more than 50 organisations to provide a range of activities in communities such as sports and physical activities, arts and crafts, community events, coffee mornings, yoga, tai chi and a range of other activities.

This year we also reviewed and re-launched our Ageing Well Steering Group in July 2021 to support partnership working and the wellbeing of Older people (aged 50+). We extended the reach of our membership to include individuals aged 50+, community groups that support people aged 50+, Members of the Public Services Board, representatives from the Third Sector and partner organisations. The purpose of the group is to take on the role of Ageing Well Champions and support the development and implementation of Swansea's Strategy for an Ageing Society, which is underpinned by the Council's commitment to the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe, signed in 2014.

### **3.3 Hate Crime**

The prevention and reduction of Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring is one the five strategic priorities identified in our Safer Swansea Strategy 2018-21. In line with Welsh Government's National Strategy on tackling Hate Crime, 'WG Tackling Hate Crimes & Incidents – A Framework for Action' the Safer Swansea Strategy 2018-21 aims to prevent Hate Crime, support victims and improve a multi-agency responses to the problem. Our

Hate Crime Stakeholder Action Plan' continues to be managed and monitored through the Hate Crime Stakeholder Group and the Safer Swansea Partnership Steering Group.

A snapshot of recorded Hate Crime in Swansea between for 12 months up until April 2022 revealed that there were 458 incidents recorded in Swansea. This represents a significant increase in the number of reported Hate Crimes during the previous year of 191 – although this in part can be explained to some extent by the pandemic and subsequent 'stay at home' restrictions. Nevertheless, since 2014 there has been a steady year on year increase in the number of reported Hate Crimes. During 2021-22, almost 70% of all recorded incidents were classified as 'racial' and just over 20% were classified as 'sexual orientation'. The remaining incidents were classified as 'religious hate crime', 'transgender hate crime' and 'other'. The largest proportion of Hate Crime incidents were recorded in the city centre and more frequent in the summer months.

Although there has been an increase in the number of reported Hate Crimes, national research conducted by the Home Office has shown that this type of crime is often under reported and therefore any increase in recorded incidents can be as a result of an increasing confidence amongst victims to report hate crime. In order to improve the response to Hate Crimes and to improve confidence of victims to report incidents in Swansea, we have continued to have frequent dialogues with South Wales Police Hate Crime team, partner agencies and BAME communities, to discuss issues identified and are in the process of developing a Hate Crime MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

This year we have continued to promote Hate Crime training opportunities for staff and provided e-learning opportunities. In addition we have worked to raise awareness of Hate Crime and reporting pathways with our partners and in local communities. A further 99 members of Council staff completed the Hate Crime e-learning training during 2021-22, in addition to the 588 members of staff who had already completed the training previously. Almost 50 people attended the Victim Support training which focused on an introduction to Hate Crime in Wales across all of the groups with protected characteristics during the same time period. We have also continued to support Hate Crime awareness week in October 2021 and have continued to work towards progressing Victim Support's Charter which sets out in detail the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations such as the Council in tackling Hate Crime, providing support and information for victims, and raising awareness of Hate Crime. We are also working to promote Victim Support's toolkit and awareness of how to report Hate Crime through our District Housing Offices and other community support services.

### **3.4 Community Cohesion**

Swansea has been an asylum seeker dispersal area since 2001 and features in the top 10 in the UK in terms of numbers of asylum seekers in relation to population size. It is one of 4 dispersal areas in Wales. Swansea is proud of

its position of welcoming those fleeing conflict and persecution and was recognised as a City of Sanctuary in 2010.

We have continued to implement the Welsh Government Community Cohesion programme during 2021-22 through a range of regional and local community cohesion activities. Welsh Government extended the funding for Community Cohesion Officers from April 2021 to March 2022. Although this represented a continuation of funding, the focus of activity changed to include the prioritisation of engagement and awareness raising, training and capacity building, tension monitoring and mitigation, inclusive policy and decision making and the prevention of hate, exploitation and extremism. Although many of our planned face to face engagement activities with our Equalities Forums, have not taken place as planned, as a result of the pandemic, we have continued to promote Community Cohesion through a range of on-line events such as National Hate Crime awareness week, Welsh Government Hate Crime campaigns, Interfaith week, LGBT+ History month, Black History month and the Holocaust Memorial day.

This year we have continued to promote awareness of the EU settlement scheme (EUSS) and to encourage EU nationals and their family members to apply for “pre-settled” or “settled status” to ensure that they are eligible for access to public services. We have supported the delivery of a number of EU Settlement Information sessions for Councillors, front line staff and key partners and supported more than 9,00 people living in Swansea to apply for “settled” or “pre-settled” status up to September 2021. Almost half of EU nationals who applied for settled or pre- settled status were from Poland and Romania.

We have also continued to work with our local partners including South Wales Police to monitor tensions and hot spots, co-ordinate a multi-agency response to reduce tensions and undertake preventative work. This year, we have held weekly virtual meetings between the Community Cohesion team, South Wales Police Hate Crime team and other key stakeholders to identify areas of tension and identify additional interventions. We have also held regular engagement meetings with key stakeholders to share intelligence and concerns from students, BAME residents, refugees and local Faith group leaders. We have also promoted social media content for Refugee Week, supported the Race Council for Wales event for Windrush elders in our communities and supported and promoted Holocaust Memorial Day, Faith awareness week, International Women’s day and the City of Sanctuary 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We also supported the Census Engagement Manager for Swansea Bay to identify ‘Hard to Reach’ groups to encourage the completion of Census 2021 forms, promoted Census material with local community groups, Faith groups and local Third sector organisations and worked with our Communications team to ensure Census material is available in various languages and to debunk myths over Census and personal data.

In terms of training and awareness raising sessions we have promoted and delivered training on the EU Settlement Scheme, Counter extremism, Modern Day slavery, assisted with Hate Crime Awareness Week, and supported a

Hate Crime awareness programme in our Schools in Swansea. We have also been working with partners to support innovative campaigns to challenge myths and misconceptions and promote positive messages, celebrating diversity, e.g. annual Eid in the Park / School Swap project / Traditional Games / Schools Hate Crime awareness projects, Interfaith week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Diwali, LGBT+ month, Windrush, Refugee week, Black History month. This year Our Abertawe – Celebrating Swansea Together event brought people from all backgrounds together to enjoy the contributions of all Swansea residents

### **3.5 Domestic Violence**

During 2021-22, our IDVA Project received 1542 referrals for high risk Domestic Abuse Victims and the Domestic Abuse Hub received referrals for 3185 children linked to incidents of Domestic Abuse. This compares to 1398 referrals for high risk Domestic Abuse victims and the Domestic Abuse Hub received 4,376 referrals to the Domestic Abuse Hub in the previous year. Whilst crisis response remains a priority, focus has also shifted on to community based Primary Prevention, working with Education and the specialist sector, as well as a renewed emphasis on working with perpetrators. We have continued to re-structure our early help offer in Swansea to complete proportionate and timely assessments, in order to ensure that children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time, from the right service to prevent escalation of need

The National Training Framework rollout continues with 100% of Local Authority staff trained in the VAWDASV Group 1, and 199 staff receiving Group 2 Ask & Act training during 2021-22. We are also continuing to implement our new Special Leave policy for staff who have suffered from Domestic Abuse.

### **3.6 Poverty**

We are continuing to work with partners to develop a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission, which is the first Poverty Truth Commission in Wales. The aim of our Poverty Truth Commission is to place those affected by poverty at the heart of decision making about poverty. Although progress with the development of Swansea's PTC has been hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic, work to develop the PTC has continued virtually on-line and face to face when regulations have allowed. All Community Commissioners have been recruited and a launch event is planned for the latter part of 2022.

We have continued to work tackle the complex causes and consequences of poverty through the provision of a wide range of support such as employability and addressing barriers to employment, education and training, welfare rights advice and entitlement, housing and the prevention of homelessness, the distribution of grants and working collaboratively with external partners. During 2021-22, we distributed over £293k to 97 projects via the Food Poverty Grant, Period Dignity in Communities Grant, the Household Support Grant and Men's Shed's funding to address poverty and social isolation and have

played a key role in the distribution of national support and grants such as winter fuel payments and cost of living payments. We have also worked with partners to develop new partnership initiatives, such as a Fuel Poverty Voucher Scheme with Citizens Advice, a Community Calling Project with Hubbub, O2 and SCVS, a Community Coordination Programme with the Children's Society and various partners across Swansea and the launch of the Hope in Swansea App led by Matthew's House.

During 2021-22 we have supported almost 500 people gain employment through our Swansea Working gateway and supported over 600 people gain accredited qualifications and improve their opportunities for employment. Our Welfare Rights Team have worked to raise £1,139, 249m of welfare entitlement payments for local residents during 2021-22 and provided training and guidance to front line staff in the Council and partner agencies to promote awareness of benefit entitlement and support clients with the process of making applications for welfare benefits.

We are continuing to revise our Tackling Poverty Strategy, aiming to ensure that tackling poverty is everybody's business. We are working through our Internal Poverty Forum, our Partnership Poverty Forum, our Financial Inclusion Steering group and other collaborative arrangements to revise our strategy. We are committed to co-producing the future strategy, working with the Poverty Truth Commission and other people with lived experience of poverty to ensure our future support is appropriate, effective and timely.

#### **4. Case Studies: Examples of our Equalities work**

This section of the report outlines a number of case studies across Swansea which demonstrates the range of different ways in which we are embedding Equality issue across the Council in terms of both policy and practice.

##### **Case Study 1: Human Rights City**

Swansea Council in partnership with Swansea's Public Services Board (PSB) is working towards declaring Swansea a Human Rights City in December 2022. The aim of the initiative is to work towards creating a city where everyone is equal and to empower people to understand their rights and respect the rights of others.

A steering group was established in September 2021 consisting of a representative from each PSB organisation to drive this ambition. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 (Human Rights Day), Swansea's Public Service Board publicly declared their intention to become a Human Rights City. Extensive engagement has taken place across Swansea to share the ambition and to gain support. In October 2021, we conducted a survey to identify what local people think the priorities should be for Swansea as a Human Rights City. The survey also provided a baseline for the awareness of Human Rights knowledge and awareness in the city.

In November 2021, a PSB Partnership Forum was hosted to explore what partners could contribute towards Swansea's ambition of declaring itself a Human Rights City. Over 60 representatives from private, public and Third sector organisations took part, including representatives from different services within Swansea Council. As a result of the events and ongoing consultation and engagement, an action plan was developed with emerging priorities for focus. Work is on-going in relation to mapping programmes, initiatives and policies currently undertaken in relation to each emerging priority with a view to declaring Human Rights City status in December 2022.

## **Case Study 2: World Re-imagined**

Launched in May 2021, The World Reimagined is a UK-wide art education project that works to transform our understanding of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its impact on all of us to help us make racial justice a reality.

Swansea is a host city for this ambitious project, which will see communities across the UK collaborate and explore a range of themes and cultural influences. These themes will unite participants and audiences to positively understand our cultural influences, and celebrate the present and future opportunities for us all, through a deeper understanding of history and what connects us as communities. It is anticipated that more than a million people will engage in the project which will include sculpture trails in Swansea and other host cities such as Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds and London.

Participating artists and icons will include 2004 Turner Prize nominee and The World Reimagined's Founding Artist Yinka Shonibare CBE, as well as Lina Viktor; Zak Ové; Sir Trevor McDonald; Lakwena Maciver; Maxim (The Prodigy); Nicola Green and Kimathi Donkor.

Michelle Gayle, co-founder of The World Reimagined, said:

"If we're going to make racial justice a reality for all, it calls on us to courageously face our shared history with honesty, empathy and grace. If we do that, we can create a future in which everyone can say I'm seen. That's the mission of The World Reimagined and we're so delighted to work with the people and communities of Swansea."

Swansea Council Leader Rob Stewart said:

"Swansea is a welcoming city that thrives on diversity. We're delighted to be partners with the The World Reimagined project.

"We'll help to create many opportunities for communities, schools, colleges, local organisations and artists to get involved - as leaders and facilitators, participants, practitioners, audiences and beneficiaries.

"Our local activity will involve widespread collaboration to create a unique arts trail across the city and its communities. Watch this space - as more details will follow soon."

### **Case Study 3: Unsung Community Heroes Event**

The Brangwyn Hall Unsung Community Heroes awards evening on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2022 was organised by Swansea Council, to recognise the contribution of more than 80 individuals and organisations to local communities during the Covid crisis. Many individuals and organisations added value to mainstream support services by reaching out to 'hard to reach groups.' Examples included;

The Swansea Muslim Community Service - set up to support families struggling to buy essentials. The service distributed food packs and essentials and operated seven days a week for people isolating throughout Swansea and some areas of Llanelli and Pontardawe. Volunteers raised funds and teamed up with Swansea Council, the Swansea Mosque foodbank and the Fareshare scheme so that they could reach out as widely as possible.

The BAME Mental Health Support (BMHS) Service - is a trusted voice when it comes to public health guidelines and early intervention health information for ethnic minorities in Wales. The organisation played an active role throughout the pandemic, including promoting vaccination knowledge and the provision of support to vulnerable community members. Other achievements included raising the profile of the Mental Health Act 1983 reform, contributing to the overall aims and objectives of Wales' Race Equality Action Plan and providing training, health awareness and practical assistance to community members.

Swansea's Muslim Hospitality Service - provides hot food and regular engagement opportunities for homeless people and refugees. During the Covid-19 pandemic, they continued to support people in need and those who were isolating through provision of food packs and other assistance. They helped provide food to NHS staff as a gesture of appreciation and arranged Christmas gifts and dinners for homeless people. The service is well known within different community groups and has good links with different organisations supporting disadvantaged people. Their work has been recognised and appreciated by members of different Faiths and community groups.



#### **Case Study 4: Domestic Abuse - Heads Up Initiative**

This year a new campaign in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot was launched which offers training to beauticians, hairdressers and barbers to help raise awareness about domestic violence and signpost clients to sources of support. The campaign is targeted at people in the industry who often have good relationships and intimate conversations with their clients to raise awareness of the Domestic Abuse and signpost their clients to a range of support. The campaign involved the distribution of promotional material to beauticians, hairdressers and barbers and free training sessions. The campaign was run jointly by Welsh Womens Aid, Swansea Council and Neath Port Council.

#### **Case Study 5: Glynn Vivian – the first UK Art Gallery of Sanctuary**

Swansea Council's Glynn Vivian Art Gallery has become the first in the UK to be awarded the accolade Art Gallery of Sanctuary which means that it has made a commitment to making the gallery welcoming and inclusive to all. Last year, Swansea celebrated 10 years as a City of Sanctuary, and the gallery's award helps to illustrate the area's ongoing support of refugees and people seeking asylum.

Supported by a Taking Part grant from the Art Council of Wales, and the Friends of the Glynn Vivian, the gallery provides workshops, events, art resources and materials to people. During the recovery from Covid-19 pandemic a welcome banner was created and been displayed at the gallery and has been on show at the National Waterfront Museum next year. Other projects by the gallery's welcome group have included community exhibitions at the Glynn Vivian, a mosaic display at Morriston Hospital and participant portraits on hoardings around the city centre's emerging Copr Bay district.

#### **Case Study 6: Hate Crime Charter Trustmark**

Last year the Council signed up to the Victim Support Hate Crime Charter and this year has been awarded the Hate Crime Charter Trustmark for demonstrating it is delivering on its pledge.

The charter sets out in detail the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations such as the Council in playing a part in tackling Hate Crime, providing support and information for victims, and to raise awareness of Hate Crime among council staff and the communities the council works with. Victim Support's charter has been compiled with the experiences of service users and what matters to them: the right to be heard, the right to report Hate Crime,

the right to be treated with respect, the right to information, the right to free and confidential support, the right to make a complaint and the right to privacy.

Organisations that adopt the charter are committing to ensuring that staff and volunteers are all expected to abide by the charter's promises whenever they come into contact with those affected by hate crime and work to build strong and inclusive communities.

### **Case Study 7: Disability Confident Employer**

In July 2021, the Council was recognised for its efforts to employ and support Disabled staff and was successfully reaccredited by the UK Government's 'Disability Confident Employer' scheme. It has held the middle 'Disability Confident Employer' Level 2 for a number of years and has retained the prestigious award for another three years.

The scheme examines how organisations take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop Disabled people. The accreditation involved evidencing how the Council challenges attitudes and increases understanding of Disability, removes barriers to Disabled people and those with long-term health conditions and ensuring that Disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Work is currently underway to actively pursue the highest 'leader' tier in the Disability Confident Employer scheme.

### **Case Study 8: Road Rainbows**

Three eye-catching road rainbows have added colour and further vibrancy to Wind Street in Swansea. The multi-coloured designs span a newly-laid road which were installed as part of the Council's regeneration programme in Wind Street and the Café quarter. They also feature three informal pedestrian crossings complete with tactile kerbsides for Disabled People. The road rainbows have been designed to build upon Swansea's diversity and to reflect positive messages associated with designs used by those celebrating LGBTQ+ life. The rainbow-coloured artworks celebrate and promote Swansea's diversity and have been installed to ensure that Wind Street is an inclusive environment and a place where everybody is free to enjoy it with friends and family without fear of intimidation, intolerance or hatred.