

Appendix A

South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC)

Joint Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2028 (Draft)



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro
Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park



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1 | Overview

The **South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC)** is a listed public body in Wales, contained in Part 2 of Schedule 19 of the Act as supplemented and amended by the Equality Act 2010 (Specification of Relevant Welsh Authorities) Order 2011.

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brought together and replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

The Act includes a **public sector equality duty** (the 'general duty'), replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender equality. This came into force on 5 April 2011.

General duty

To ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities.

The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review. This will achieve better outcomes for all. Public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Sex
- Disability
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief It applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to eliminate discrimination in employment.

The phrase 'protected group' is sometimes used to refer to people who share a protected characteristic.

Specific duties in Wales

Specific duties in Wales support listed bodies in their performance of the general duty.

The specific duties set out the steps that listed bodies in Wales must take in order to demonstrate that they are meeting the general duty.

The duties inter-relate and more details on each aspect can be found in the following guidance:

1. *The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty (An Overview)*
2. *Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plans*
3. *Engagement and the Equality Duty*
4. *Assessing Impact and the Equality Duty*
5. *Equality Information and the Equality Duty*
6. *Employment Information, Pay Differences and Staff Training and the Equality Duty*
7. *Procurement and the Equality Duty*
8. *Annual Reporting, Publishing and Ministerial Duties and the Equality Duty*

2 | South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) –

Our Journey

The South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) has been enabled by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The SWWCJC was formally constituted in January 2022 and covers the local authority areas of: Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea.

The purpose of the SWWCJC is to improve the regional planning, co-ordination and delivery of transport, land use planning, economic development and energy in collaboration with partner organisations and our communities.

The Committee is made up of representation from Carmarthenshire County Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Swansea Council, together with Bannau Brycheiniog and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities.

The six organisations have come together to publish a joint strategy focusing on equality, diversity, and inclusion. Individually, the six organisations have identified objectives to promote equality and inclusion as part of their service delivery commitment. The objectives have been informed by the views and feedback of gained from the local communities, through ongoing participation to included established focus groups and consultation.

The SWWCJC will underpin their partners commitment/s to promote equality and inclusion as part of their service delivery. The SWWCJC will further promote the commitment for further opportunities for inclusion and diversity within South West Wales Region working in partnership with their stakeholders to inform strategic decisions.

3 | Collaboration

The collaborative approach of the SWWCJC will build upon the objectives derived by each partner organisation, whilst seeking further opportunities to ensure a coherent regional approach to benefit our people living, working and visiting South West Wales.

The shared vision of a Corporate Joint Committee is to promote a more cohesive and consistent mechanism of collaboration across Wales.

Strategic decisions are underpinned by the integrated impact assessment process.

The SWWCJC recognises the delivery of the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives 2024-2028 under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The joint strategy will complement Welsh Government's equality plans, and aims to align and make connections between existing plans (such as the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (<https://www.gov.wales/antiracist-wales-action-plan>) and LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales (<https://www.gov.wales/lgbtq-action-plan-wales>)).

4 | Strategic Objectives

The SWWCJC Equality Objective is already embedded within our Corporate Plan 2023 -2028 as summarised below.

To deliver a more equal South West Wales by 2035 by contributing towards:

- (a) The achievement of the [Welsh Government's long-term equality aim](#) of eliminating inequality caused by poverty (Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024);
- (b) The achievement of the [Equality statement set out in Llwybr Newydd](#) (Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021) which is to make our transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport,

and
- (c) The achievement of the [Welsh Government's long-term equality aims](#) of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal and where everyone is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. There will be no room for racism and / or discrimination of any kind."

5 | Our Commitment

The SWWCJC is committed to;

- Strengthen the focus on equality and diversity, whereby strategic decisions will be subject to the integrated impact assessment process adopted.
- Explore and further develop the engagement and participation systems active within each constituent authority, to ensure strong voice and influence.
- Explore and further develop our network to ensure the experiences of people who share one or more of the protected characteristics to inform our decision making.
- Through regular training and engagement ensure that representatives and partners will be equipped to challenge the Functions of the SWWCJC to promote an equal, diverse and inclusive vision for South West Wales
- Strategic decisions are subject to the integrated impact assessment process, to challenge risk of inequality as part of the strategic decisions.

- Currently, staff are employed under the constituent local authorities. The SWWCJC will support their representatives, partners and political members to flourish and thrive within an equal, fair and inclusive environment.
- SWWCJC will invest to develop and create learning cultures to allow the impact of equality, diversity, and inclusion to be monitored and challenged, promoting continuous improvement.
- This strategy will strive to reduce inequalities within South West Wales, in accordance with the Functions of the SWWCJC.

Our strategic objectives are priorities, and aim to help to deliver equality for our stakeholders:

- Communities within South West Wales
- Visitors to South West Wales
- Our workforce
- Our partners
- Businesses and Local Economy

6 | Engagement and Consultation

The SWWCJC will underpin their partners commitment/s to promote equality and inclusion as part of their service delivery.

The SWWCJC will further promote the commitment for further opportunities for inclusion and diversity within South West Wales Region working in partnership with their stakeholders to inform strategic decisions through participation. The SWWCJC is committed to;

- Explore and further develop the engagement and participation systems active within each constituent authority, to ensure strong voice and influence.
- Consult ahead of strategic decisions.
- Review previous studies and incorporate the findings to inform future engagement and consultations events.
- Review and seek continuous improvement by monitoring the feedback and approach adopted to engage and consult.

Fundamentals of Engagement and Consultation

- To provide feedback to the views and suggestions received
- To advise on actions following the feedback received
- To provide reasoning
- Encourage ongoing engagement through dedicated groups

7 | Monitoring and Reporting

We will monitor the impact of engagement, consultation in relation to the Functions of the SWWCJC that will inform strategic decisions, through the integrated impact process.

To monitor the objective/ss, the progress of the action/s within this strategy will be shared within the annual report presented to the SWWCJC for endorsement and be published on <http://www.cjcsouthwest.wales/> either as a standalone report or be incorporated the annual report of the Corporate Plan (Well-being Objectives).

8 | SWWCJC Regional Action Plan (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)

The SWWCJC ethos is to actively promote a collaborative approach amongst their stakeholders. Our partners, have already forged relationships and defined networks that have informed their strategies for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

The SWWCJC will explore opportunities to further expand engagement (as necessary) to ensure they identify and reach out to unrepresented groups within South West Wales who may be impacted by the strategic decision making for the Functions of the SWWCJC.

In the development of this joint strategy the SWWCJC has utilised commitment of each partner as outlined within their Strategic Equality Plans.

The SWWCJC will explore the strengths and weaknesses of the partner established methods for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, to collectively work to reflect and inform the development of draft strategic priorities forming the **SWWCJC Strategic Equality Plan**.

Appendix 1 SWWCJC Regional Action Plan (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) outlines the SWWCJC commitment to develop and implement the SWWCJC Strategic Equality Plan.

Whilst Objective 1 is already included within the SWWCJC Corporate Plan (SWWCJC Equality Objective), the SWWCJC will include additional Objectives as and review and incorporate within the SWWCJC priorities for 2025/2026.

Appendix 1 SWWCJC Regional Action Plan (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)

Strategic Equality Objective	Target	Action	Monitoring	Review	Action Officer	Status (In Progress/Closed/ Delayed)
Strategic Equality Objective 1. To deliver a more equal South West Wales by 2035 by contributing towards:	(a) The achievement of the Welsh Government's long-term equality aim of eliminating inequality caused by poverty (Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2024);					
	(b) The achievement of the Equality statement set out in Llwybr Newydd (Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021) which is to make our transport services and infrastructure accessible and inclusive by aiming to remove the physical, attitudinal, environmental, systemic, linguistic and economic barriers that prevent people from using sustainable transport,					
	(c) The achievement of the Welsh Government's long-term equality aims of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal and where everyone is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. There will be no room for racism and / or discrimination of any kind."					



<p>Strategic Equality Objective 2.</p> <p>Develop and Implement the SWWCJC Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) in accordance with SMART (<i>specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound</i>) principles.</p> <p>The SEP will outline the equality objective in relation to each of the protected characteristics or outline and publish its reasons for not doing so. The following will be considered for each objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have all three aims of the general duty been considered (that is, to eliminate discrimination/harassment, advance equality and foster good relations) in relation to each characteristic?</i> • <i>Is there a focus on the key issues affecting the different characteristics and the steps that can most effectively address any disadvantage?</i> <p>Note. Guidance to be adopted</p> <p>Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plans</p> <p>A Guide for Listed Public Authorities in Wales</p> <p>equality objectives and strategic equality plans wales.pdf (equalityhumanrights.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and publish its equality objectives at least every four years from the first date of publication. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish objectives to meet the general duty. Note. <i>If an authority does not have an objective for each protected characteristic – in addition to any objective to address pay differences – it must publish reasons why not</i> 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a statement setting out the steps the SWWCJC has taken (or intends to take to meet the objectives) and how long it expects to take to meet each objective 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make appropriate arrangements to monitor progress towards meeting its objectives and to monitor the effectiveness of its approach 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give appropriate consideration to relevant equality information the SWWCJC holds when considering what its equality objectives should be. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives on pay difference • have due regard to the need to have objectives to address the causes of any pay differences that 					

	<p>seem reasonably likely to be related to any of the protected characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish an equality objective to address any gender pay gap identified or else publish reasons why it has not done so <p><i>Note. Even where an authority publishes an equality objective to address pay differences in relation to any protected characteristic, it must still have due regard to the need to have other equality objectives in relation to that protected characteristic. If it publishes no other such objective, it will need to explain why not.</i></p>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SWWCJC will underpin their partner's commitment/s to promote equality and inclusion as included within their SEP to inform the draft SWWCJC Regional Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SWWCJC will further seek opportunities for inclusion and diversity within South West Wales Region working in partnership with their stakeholders to inform strategic decisions. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and further develop the engagement and participation systems active within each constituent authority, to ensure strong voice and influence. 					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and further develop our network to ensure the experiences of people who share one or more of the protected characteristics to inform our decision making. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the focus on equality and diversity, whereby strategic decisions will be subject to the integrated impact assessment process adopted. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through regular training and engagement ensure that representatives and partners will be equipped to challenge the Functions of the SWWCJC to promote an equal, diverse and inclusive vision for South West Wales 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, staff are employed under the constituent local authorities. The SWWCJC will support their representatives, partners and political members to flourish and thrive within an equal, fair and inclusive environment and not be unfairly disadvantaged. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWWCJC will invest to develop and create learning cultures to allow the impact of equality, diversity, and inclusion to be monitored and challenged, promoting continuous improvement 					

Strategic Equality Objective 3. Integrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the Functions of the SWWCJC together with mechanisms for Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and cascade advice and guidance 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and awareness 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms to challenge and address inequality 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes for Monitoring and Review 					
Strategic Equality Objective 4. Strengthen the Participation, Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders applicable to SWWCJC Functions within the South West Wales Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use the knowledge and experience of the established stakeholder advisory groups to inform and influence the work streams. • To strengthen links with key stakeholders and seek to obtain new or additional feedback from them about their experiences, suggestions and challenges. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current methods of engagement and evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of the current approach. • Propose and suggest viable improvements 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake audits for accessibility 					
Strategic Equality Objective 5. SWWCJC Values (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop training and awareness packages for SWWCJC representatives and members 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and Champion equality, diversity and inclusion 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and Monitor protocols to ensure partner and Welsh Government commitments are aligned. • Develop mechanisms to capture and share good practice as part of continuous improvement 					

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