

North Wales Police and North Wales
Police and Crime Commissioner

Joint Equality Plan Annual Report 2020/21



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU**
**NORTH WALES
POLICE**

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OFFICE OF THE **POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER** NORTH WALES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to our Strategic Equality Plan

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the equality duties placed on public sector bodies. Both North Wales Police and the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner are bound by this legislation. We have a responsibility under the Act to meet the general and specific duties demonstrating the promotion of fairness and equality throughout the operation of policing services in North Wales.

Our Joint Strategic Equality Plan is a four-year plan which outlines the equality challenges faced in policing North Wales and how we jointly intend to meet and overcome these; the current iteration of the plan was published in April 2019. This updated plan incorporated much of the ongoing work from the previous plan and provides the updated strategic focus for equality in North Wales Police up to 2023.

The Joint Strategic Equality Plan is also reviewed each year to ensure that it is fit for purpose and continues to meet the needs of the Force and the Commissioner and more importantly the needs of the people of North Wales. An annual report is produced showing our progress and achievements and gives further detail on the activity undertaken by the Force and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to meet our equality duties. This is the second annual report for the 2019-2023 Plan.

Throughout this reporting period policing and society in general has been deeply affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent Coronavirus legislation restrictions.

Throughout the pandemic the Public Sector Equality Duty has remained unchanged and therefore the duties imposed upon the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable have continued.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 'contains temporary measures designed to mitigate these impacts, including the spread of infection, and increasing the capacity of the public service system'. Some of these measures have applied to policing and it is clear that through the enforcement of these restrictions that some groups have been more affected than others, in particular those with the relevant protected characteristics of age, race and disability.

Regarding the enforcement of restrictions in North Wales:

- Seven in ten (70%) residents felt that the police have struck a good balance with regards to the application of COVID-19 lockdown rules and regulations.
- Around a quarter (23%) disagreed - with most arguing that the police have been too lenient (20%), although a small selection (3%) said that they have been too strict.
- Over four fifths (84%) of residents support police action to enforce local lockdowns, with over half (54%) saying they strongly support it.
- Only 6% oppose police action to enforce local lockdowns.

We are driven to root out inequality where it exists in our service and these challenging and uncertain times have hardened our resolve in this regard. The type and nature of crime prevalent in North Wales has changed due to the impact of the pandemic however the quality of our service and how this is delivered to all our communities must be maintained. We continue to impact assess our activity and monitor our service.

1.2 Responsibilities

The Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner are ultimately responsible for ensuring the requirements of the equality legislation are met. The Joint Strategic Equality Plan outlines how we will meet the requirements of the general and specific duties of the Equality Act 2010.

Within the Plan we have set equality objectives for policing in North Wales. The Force and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will carry out the actions that will enable us to meet these objectives. Evidence of the progression of these actions is gathered by the Force Diversity Unit and is overseen by the Force Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board, this is a strategic board that meets quarterly and is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable. Scrutiny is provided by Staff Associations, Staff Support Networks and Independent members; these arrangements and the work that takes place is monitored by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

2. IDENTIFYING, COLLECTING AND USING INFORMATION

We identify, collect and use information from a variety of different sources to support our equality plan.

2.1 Our Communities

Having good channels of engagement can help to improve satisfaction in policing amongst communities, especially those who may feel disadvantaged, excluded, vulnerable, isolated or marginalised. We therefore decided we must improve upon current levels of engagement especially with minority communities. Understanding our communities, quality engagement and good relations are vital for increasing confidence in the service that we deliver.

Our current system of working with community groups¹ continues to be an effective way of engaging; this has been confirmed in feedback from the individual groups, the overarching Diversity Steering Group and our Independent Advisory Group members.

2.2 Our Partners

We recognise that policing does not take place in a vacuum and so understanding the partnership landscape is important. We will continue to work alongside our partners and put systems in place to enable the collection, collation and analysis of data that identifies disparity in our service delivery. This joint service delivery will enable a more effective public service provision across our communities.

2.3 Our Organisation

The Force produces and publishes its annual Workforce Representation Report which includes the steps that the Force has taken to identify and collect employment information. It is vital that we understand the composition of our workforce. We have formal and informal methods of engagement with our staff to ensure we better understand how to develop an inclusive organisational culture that promotes and embeds diversity and equality.

¹Our police and community consultation groups include a Disability Group, LGBT+ Group, Race Group, Trans Group.

3. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND PROGRESS

We have set equality objectives for policing in North Wales. We have also identified specific activities to help us achieve this.

3.1 Strategic Approach to Equality and Diversity

Equality Objective	Monitor and assess our approach to the Equality Act across all areas of business ensuring equality and fairness throughout the organisation and across our policing priorities.
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to undertake Equality Impact Assessments on decisions made including policy and procurement.• Currently hold Disability Confident Employer Award and we will work towards the Disability Confident Leader Award.• Scrutiny of Professional Standards matters (including complaints and dissatisfaction).• Maintain a fair and transparent commissioning process for all commissioned services.• Undertake monitoring of staff opinion.• Maintain and resource the strategic oversight of the Force Equality and Diversity Committee.• Scrutiny of Out of Court Disposals

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Equality Impact Assessments

This reporting period Equality Impact Assessments have become even more deeply embedded into the North Wales Police assurance framework, ensuring a more stringent and comprehensive process of assurance. Impact assessments regarding policy and practice make up part of a suite of documents that is overseen by the North Wales Police Assurance Board. This board provides reassurance that there is sufficient evidence that policy, risk management and business continuity consider equality impact.

Disability Confident Leader

Following on from successful renewal of accreditation of the Disability Confident Employer Scheme North Wales Police continues to make progress towards the Disability Confident Leader Award and is working with local partners to attain accreditation.

Scrutiny of Professional Standards

A range of scrutiny mechanisms exist, these include a People Intelligence Panel that provides a learning environment to help maintain individual and organisational learning, so that repeated issues do not occur. The panel considers live cases involving vetting queries, professional standards issues, grievances and misconduct cases.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner carries out thorough scrutiny of professional standards matters. A quarterly Professional Standards Scrutiny Board is held which is chaired by the OPCC and attended by the DCC and Head of the Professional Standards Department. Analysis is carried out of Force statistics around complaints and misconduct matters. Also, current trends, issues and organisational learning are discussed. In addition, the OPCC carries out a dip sampling process of complaints matters every month and ensures to include claims of discrimination in the dip sampling procedure.

Social Value

North Wales Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner continues to promote ongoing adherence to Ethical Procurement and the Social Value agenda. This guarantees that spending on goods, supplies and services contributes significantly to the local and regional economy and this spending should encourage and ensure equal opportunities.

Workforce Survey

In 2019 a National Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in Policing Survey was launched to examine inclusivity and workplace culture. In August 2020 a Summary of Research Findings report was released.

North Wales Police continues to work with the Policing Research Unit at Durham University to consider the Force level findings and to work on future follow up surveys that will track attitudes and behaviours.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Governance

During this reporting period North Wales Police has sought to strengthen and streamline the way it governs this area of business. To that end a three-tier structure has been introduced; this is described as:

Local delivery – each service area has Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as a standing agenda item at its senior management team meetings, here they discuss what activity is currently taking place to support the delivery of the Strategy.

Tactical management – all service areas and any bespoke pieces of work to support the plan report to a Tactical EDI Board, this board manages performance and delivers on the Strategy.

Strategic oversight – The Tactical EDI Board reports to a Strategic EDI Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, it has ownership of the Strategy and it ensures that the Force Strategy is in line with other national police service plans.

Out of Court Disposals

Since the Force introduced a system that enabled clearer, more informed and relevant decisions to be made in regard to Community Resolutions, Conditional Cautions and Out of Court Disposals it has been able to implement a number of scrutiny panels to consider any areas of disproportionality.

The Force recognises that it is the entry into the Criminal Justice System and so monitors areas of disproportionality within those detained or dealt with by out of court disposal. Working closely with partners the Force considers any relevant disproportionality data, carries out dip sampling with partner agencies within the Criminal Justice System and is assisted by a group of advisors that provide independent scrutiny.

The Force is now better placed to work with partners to address and reduce any areas of disproportionality found.

3.2a Service Delivery

Equality Objective	Effective and fair use of powers.
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure there is no disproportionality across certain key policing activities such as stop & search, arrests, detention etc. • To ensure no disproportionality in use of force. • To demonstrate appropriate delivery of Code of Ethics. • Improving satisfaction.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Disproportionality

This reporting period a Disproportionality Task and Finish Group was commissioned by the Tactical EDI Board to undertake a mapping exercise and to consider the governance and existing levels of scrutiny around disproportionality within data.

Several key policing activities were considered including: Stop and Search, Use of Force, Complaints, Conduct, Vetting, Detentions, Out of Court Disposals and Hate Crime. The Group confirmed the governance arrangements of each theme, ensured there was internal and external scrutiny in place and reported back on potential 'data gaps' and how to develop performance measures.

Use of Force

In addition to the above the Force maintains a level of scrutiny specific to the Use of Force; to do so it uses a number of forums; these include: The Tactical and Strategic Conflict Management Scrutiny Boards (internal) and a Public Encounters Board (external).

This is an example of how North Wales Police looks for disproportionality in its use of powers, seeks to understand the causes of disparity and identifies ways to address any disparities found.

Code of Ethics

Following a previous HMICFRS inspection (PEEL) where the Force was notified that it had a strong and consistent understanding of the Code of Ethics. It has gone on to further develop in this area.

The Force Ethics Committee is responsible for 'enhancing trust and confidence in the ethical governance and actions of North Wales Police and the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner'. This reporting period we have further developed the independent scrutiny of this committee and have recently recruited an independent member to act as Chair.

Through this committee members of North Wales Police can submit 'ethical dilemmas' to be discussed and the committee also links to the United Kingdom Police Ethics Guidance Group.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Improving Satisfaction

North Wales Police is seeking to identify and engage with the diverse communities that it serves to address possible adverse perceptions and improve levels of satisfaction across all communities. The 2020 Public Confidence Survey findings state the following:

- General confidence in Police remains high, **93%** (compared with 89% in 2019 survey).
- **78%** think the Police do a good or excellent job (75%).
- **95%** of the public think the Police would treat them with respect if they had contact (92%)
- **87%** of the public think the Police would treat them fairly, regardless of who they are (85%).
- Roughly **75%** of the public think Police are dealing with things that matter to the community, can be relied upon to be there when needed, provide reassurance, provide an effective service and provide good value for money (roughly 70%).
- **92%** of people feel safe from crime and disorder, living in North Wales (86%).
- **97%** of people felt that North Wales is safer, or as safe, compared with the rest of the UK.
- Four fifths (**80%**) of residents feel that North Wales is safer; with around half (48%) feeling that it is a lot safer. Only 2% of feel it is less safe, whilst 17% feel that North Wales is as safe as the rest of the UK. The proportion of residents who feel North Wales is safer than the rest of the UK has increased significantly by 8 percentage points when compared with the 2019 survey (72%).

Regarding restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic:

- Seven in ten (**70%**) residents feel that the police have struck a good balance with regards to the application of Covid-19 lockdown rules and regulations. Around a quarter (23%) disagreed – with most arguing that the police have been too lenient (20%), although a small selection (3%) said that they have been too strict.
- Over four fifths (**84%**) of residents support police action to enforce local lockdowns, with over half (54%) saying they strongly support it. Only 6% oppose police action to enforce local lockdowns.

3.2b Service Delivery

Equality Objective	Accessible and responsive service delivery.
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the communication processes for the delivery of services (e.g. sign, translation etc.). • Raise general awareness of hate crime and domestic violence. • Engage and communicate with people in our communities about crimes that cause the greatest harm to vulnerable people. • Maintain a hate crime scrutiny process that includes scrutiny of hate crime performance data. • Scrutinise domestic abuse and sexual violence data. • Undertake targeted campaigns to raise awareness of disability related hate crime and its impacts particularly for vulnerable victims, especially those with learning difficulties. • Support and promote Hate Crime Awareness Week. • Review data on crimes against older people to ensure older victims receive a fair service.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Communication

This reporting period we have released the video How to contact North Wales Police for emergencies and non-emergencies and information about the text Short Message Service (SMS) for the deaf community.

- When compared with last year, the proportion of residents who said contacting North Wales Police by each of the non-emergency contact methods was easy has increased across the board, particularly via the non-emergency number 101 (**89%** this year vs 69% last year).
- When asked in what circumstances, if any, they would use an online method to contact the Police in a non-emergency a fifth (**20%**) said they would not use an online method to contact the Police in a non-emergency.
- Residents would expect a more instantaneous response to any queries made via webchat (**27%** would expect a response within 10 mins) but are willing to wait a little longer for a response to queries made via email/North Wales Police website (**38%** would expect a response within 24 hours).

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Raising Awareness

The PCC and Force Modern Slavery Unit have attended, supported and given modern slavery awareness sessions where it has been possible to do so. This includes speeches by the PCC and presentations at organisations such as the Soroptomists and the Wrexham Round Table.

Both the Force and OPCC have participated in social media campaigns to raise awareness of different types of modern slavery issues, including forced labour and criminal exploitation (County Lines).

Domestic Abuse Campaigns During Covid-19 Restrictions

- Worked with Police Volunteers to deliver leaflets to all Foodbanks across North Wales which highlighted Domestic Abuse for victims and 'bystanders' so they could identify it and know what to do if they saw or suspected it.
- Leaflet drops through Tesco home deliveries.
- We also sent via post the same information to all Pharmacies across North Wales.
- Make the Cut - Hairdresser and Beautician training session (delivered just before lockdown)
- Q&A sessions on Instagram around Stalking and Harassment and DA on White Ribbon day. (Lockdown #2)
- International Men's day (November 2020) gave us the opportunity to promote services for male victims of domestic abuse, by linking in directly with the Mankind Initiative.
- The North Wales PVPU strategic lead on Domestic Abuse took part in a programme for Channel 5 about how to leave an abusive partner. The programme was Covid relevant and promoted on North Wales Police social media platforms.
- North Wales Police linked in with the Live Fear Free Helpline on a daily basis in order to monitor refuge levels in case a resilience plan was required in the event that refuges were full.
- The SAS group - Survivors Advising Services is a new initiative. The first online session was in February 2021 with further ones planned. It's a way for victims/survivors to link in with Police, CPS, NHS and all Six Local Authorities to see where improvements can be made to service provision to those affected by Domestic Abuse.
- OPCC sent a series of Tweets and Facebook posts during initial lockdown sharing Domestic Abuse and Violence support services stressing the importance of victims contacting the police, keeping safe, and accessing support.
- OPCC also prepared an article for two of Welsh language community newspapers about the fact that Domestic Abuse occurs within our Welsh speaking rural communities and that we all have a responsibility to know the signs etc, especially during the pandemic when victims are particularly isolated.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Initiatives for Vulnerable People

Keep Safe Cymru Card - Under the leadership of the Force Control Centre, two police volunteers have been recruited to manage and redevelop the Keep Safe Cymru Card scheme. The card which launched initially in 2016 fell into disuse due to resourcing issues with maintenance of the scheme. A sustainable model for running the scheme has now been established with efforts committed to getting it up and running again. Work has begun on re-establishing the background administration required for the scheme.

Monitoring Hate Crime Reporting and Prosecutions

This reporting period (April 2020-March 2021) a report from the Crown Prosecution Service gave the following hate crime figures²:

- 85.6% (143/167) of all North Wales Police Hate Crime prosecutions were successful (86.7% / 86.1%).
- 75% (21/28) of all Crime Against Older People prosecutions were successful (81.8% / 84.3%).
- 87.7% (107/122) of all racist or religious hate crime prosecutions were successful (86.5% / 87.0%).
- 77.5% (31/40) of all homophobic or transphobic hate crime prosecutions were successful (88.8% / 83.5%).
- 100% (5/5) of all disability hate crime prosecutions were successful (80.8% / 83.3%).

Protecting Vulnerable People

The Force has developed a Protecting Vulnerable People Unit Governance Board which analyses Force performance in protecting and safeguarding vulnerable people within the policing priorities. The Board has been streamlined but still includes representation from the OPCC. The Board continues to enable the Force and PCC to direct funding appropriately, identify problems or barriers and helps to ensure the best service for victims.

The Force and OPCC have been actively involved in establishing a new regional strategic board to monitor and oversee the work of the Force, PCC and key regional partners regarding tackling and dealing with the issues that arise from vulnerability and exploitation. The new Vulnerability and Exploitation Board is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The key purpose of the new board is to ensure effective performance by the police, local authorities, and wider partners in how they tackle key issues such as domestic abuse, sexual violence, modern slavery and the underlying issues it raises such as trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude and criminal exploitation (including County Lines). All these issues are bigger than policing alone and require a partnership approach to protect and safeguard victims and to bring perpetrators to justice. People with certain protected characteristics are more likely to be victims of several crime types covered in this agenda including women, young people and those with substance misuse and/or mental health problems.

²Figures in brackets show average percentages; firstly, for England and Wales combined, then for Wales alone.

3.3 The Workforce and Working Environment

Equality Objective	<p>Work towards a representative workforce and build a working environment that includes everyone and that encourages all staff to develop and progress.</p>
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Force Workforce Representation Strategy and ensure its ongoing oversight and scrutiny. • Target individuals from minority backgrounds to ensure that the diversity in our Force represents the communities we serve. • Ensure internal staff support networks have regular engagement with the Chief Constable and the Commissioner. • Monitor data and publish an Annual Workforce Representation Report. • The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner will scrutinise HR policy and practice. • Ensure Blue Light Framework drives activity to improve health and wellbeing for all members of staff.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Workforce Representation

Following the Introduction of a new Workforce Representation Team last year much progress has been made in this area. The team was established to deliver on the Force’s commitment towards having a representative Force which is key for trust, confidence and legitimacy so we can deliver an efficient and effective service for all our communities.

The team drives Positive Action in several areas including attraction, recruitment, progression and retention activity. The Force is now starting to see the positive outcomes this work can deliver. This work also links to the National Police Chiefs Council’s ‘Our Workforce Toolkit’.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Staff Support Networks

The Force remains committed to providing opportunities for 'representation of voice' at all levels and is keen to understand the 'lived experience' of its staff, it therefore supports the independence of its Staff Support Networks. These networks are made up of police officers and staff that volunteer to support these independent groups. This year we have five Staff Support Networks that represent underrepresented groups; these include:

- The Black and Asian Police Association
- The Disability Support Network
- The Gender Equality Network
- The LGBT+ Network
- The Parents & Carers Network

Each of the networks has a terms of reference and meets at least quarterly. They also work together on intersectional matters via an 'Equality Hwb' meeting. The networks sit on many of the Forces Tactical and Strategic Boards that meet, and they act as a critical friend to the Force and hold the NWP to account on a variety of matters. Additionally, they will meet with the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Employment Monitoring

This year we have improved our ability to capture employment monitoring data in real time and this is discussed at a variety of forums, it is this scrutiny that directs our Positive Action activity. This reporting year National Standards of Workforce Data have been introduced by the NPCC, these standards ensure consistency in the way data relating to Protected Characteristics are captured across the Police Service. Much work has been undertaken this year to embed these standards within our systems meaning that next year's Employment Monitoring Report will have richer data than ever before.

Gender Pay Gap Analysis

The Force has once again met its specific duty of publishing data relating to Gender Pay. This year's report shows that overall, the NWP gender pay gap has once again reduced. In comparison to last year, there has been an increase in female officers in the upper pay quartile (from 21.3% to 24.2%), whilst the percentage of females in the lower pay quartile has decreased (from 45.1% to 44.6%). More details including a narrative explanation and how the Force will continue to address the Gender Pay Gap can be found at the above link via the force website.

Health & Wellbeing

The Blue Light Wellbeing Framework is a self-assessment tool that contains learning from across the Police Service, academia and Public Health England. It challenges the service to improve the health and wellbeing of its workforce. The NWP Head of Medical Services and Wellbeing reports to a Strategic Health & Wellbeing Board and states that we are 69% fully developed, 28% in development and 3% underdeveloped within the framework. The Head of Medical Services and Wellbeing meets quarterly with the Wellbeing Lead to assess progress.

3.4 Effective Partnership Working

Equality Objective	Ensure effective working relationships with statutory and third sector partners.
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and develop work with North Wales Public Sector Equality Network. • Funding/joint events/support of third sector partners. • Annual event for consultation with third sector partners (OPCC).

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

North Wales Public Sector Equality Network

The North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN) is an informal network of partners working together to advance equality. Public sector representation includes: North Wales Local Authorities, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Police and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust and Snowdonia National Parks Authority. NWPSSEN maintain awareness of priorities identified by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, facilitate engagement with a range of individuals including those representing people with protected characteristics and produce a range of good practice guides to inform public sector organisations across North Wales. Also see section on Partnership Working below (pg 19).

Annual OPCC Third Sector Engagement Event

An online event was held at the end of 2020. All members of the third sector were invited who have an interest in criminal justice and associated matters. The event was held to gain views on mid-term changes to the Police and Crime Plan.

Understanding the Partnership Landscape

The Force works with local partners to understand what the individual responsibilities and joint key interdependencies are in respect of joint service delivery. Also see section on Partnership Working below (pg 19).

This reporting period a Joint Partnerships and Collaboration Policy has been ratified to ensure that any joint working is proportionate and appropriate. Adhering to the Policy creates significant opportunities to improve services and reduce associated costs; it also ensures that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place.

Tackling Disparity

The police are the entry point into the criminal justice system, as such the Force undertakes analysis to identify disproportionality in people brought into custody or dealt with by out-of-court disposal. A multi-agency Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel has been established to review sample cases and to understand the causes of disparity and take steps to address it where it is found.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Joint Service Delivery

The Force works with several strategic partners to identify key pledges and develop whole system strategies to achieve a shared local vision. Recent examples of this include:

- Female Offending Blueprint for Wales
- Integrated Offender Management Cymru
- Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales

3.5 Communication and Engagement

Equality Objective	Ensure that we engage and communicate with the people of North Wales and that we do so in an accessible and inclusive way.
Planned Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and increase existing public facing and staff equality forums and stakeholder groups. • Manage contacts and maintain relationships with key stakeholders. • Undertake engagement activity as set out in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Engagement Strategy and Plan. • Provide information and communicate in accessible ways. • Maintain relationships with local partners • Scrutinise Force local policing engagement.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Community Contacts Database

In addition to the quarterly community consultation framework this period the Force has created new Community Contacts Databases, these are living documents that will be maintained and updated by policing districts. The information contained within in these documents will help inform new Engagement Toolkits.

Achievements this reporting period include but are not limited to:

Engagement Strategies

A Force Engagement Toolkit has been developed with a menu of tactical engagement tools and recommendations for best methods of communication when engaging with different community groups. This toolkit has been developed in conjunction with community groups.

An OPCC Engagement Strategy is being finalised and an Equality Impact Assessment is being carried out alongside this work to ensure that ongoing processes for engagement remain accessible and appropriate for all our communities.

Young People

In April 2020 the North Wales Youth Commission finalised their youth engagement project and provided the Police and Crime Commissioner with their final report on the policing priorities for young people in North Wales. Both the Force and OPCC have been working towards the recommendations made in the report and have been providing updates for the young people who took part in the project. In order to move the work forward the Force have recruited a Youth Engagement and Intervention Officer to build on the work to engage young people on policing issues and to facilitate better and more robust participation from young people in policing matters in North Wales.

More Use of Easy Read

Where the Force and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner publish material, they seek to do so in accessible formats. A recent example is the public online survey to gain views on new police and crime priorities for a new Police and Crime Plan. Publishing 'easy read' versions of the survey enables several groups to participate more effectively in public life. This assists us to engage with young people, those with additional learning needs and those who use English / Welsh as an additional language.

See also: Accessibility Statement for www.north-wales.police.uk

4. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

In addition to setting our own organisation-based equality objectives, we have also worked with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (the Network) to develop a set of shared equality objectives.

The Network is made up of a number of key local partners including the six local authorities of North Wales³, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Welsh Ambulance Service, Snowdonia National Park Authority and the Force and OPCC.

Partnership working through the Network is considered to be a best practice approach to equality through collaboration and has previously received acclaim from Welsh ministers.

In setting both our own objectives and those shared with local partners, we have followed the requirements of the specific duties. We have used national research, local information and information from engagement and consultation with staff and the public to inform our decisions on which equality objectives to set.

National Research - provided us with a starting point for developing our equality objectives.

Local Information - allowed us to identify local issues which may not have been recognised nationally. We continue to review and analyse local information to ensure our objectives remain appropriate and relevant.

Information from Engagement - From national information we were able to establish areas of concern and identify groups most at risk of discrimination. We then used this information to guide our engagement with local people. Our engagement focuses on common recurring themes and issues of joint concern.

Consultation with Staff and Public - Using existing and new forums we have hosted several focus groups made up of people with protected characteristics. Participants' contribution has helped inform the objectives which are a key part of the Equality Plan.

Partnership Objectives - In considering its joint responsibilities the Network has developed its own shared objectives; these are:

- Objective 1: Address health inequalities
- Objective 2: Address unequal outcomes in Education to maximise individual potential
- Objective 3: Address inequalities in employment and pay
- Objective 4: Address inequalities in personal safety
- Objective 5: Address inequalities in representation and voice
- Objective 6: Address inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment

A review is currently underway of these objectives. Updated objectives are anticipated to be agreed by the end of 2021.

³Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

When the Force or Commissioner make decisions, they must consider the people affected by that decision, whether that is service users, employees or even partners. In order to do this fairly we use an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) tool. The purpose of the EIA is to gauge and ensure fairness across the nine protected characteristics⁴. It works by ensuring consideration is given to policies, functions, activities and decisions to determine whether they have a significant effect on people, and if so, assess if there is perceived or actual unfairness or disadvantage to those affected by that decision. The EIA acts as a risk assessment and ensures that our decisions pay due regard to the three aims of the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010.

In addition to the nine protected characteristics, there is a Duty under the Equality Act 2010, which became effective for devolved Welsh public bodies from March 2021, to consider those people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage / poverty. This is referred to as the Socio-economic Duty; it encourages better decision making, ensuring more equal outcomes for people, reducing inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Neither the Force nor the OPCC are listed as 'relevant authorities' under 'The Equality Act (Authorities subject to the Socio-economic Inequality Duty) (Wales) Regulations 2021'; however, in the spirit of collaboration and with a view to protecting the most vulnerable in our society, socio-economic considerations will be added to our practice around Equality Impact Assessments.

The Force has also introduced a Welsh Language Impact Assessment template to ensure that all policy/process/practice decisions consider Welsh Language provision. The template captures evidence to show how the Welsh Language Standards have been met. North Wales Police and the OPCC also have a Joint Welsh Language Strategy that ensures equal status to both the Welsh and English languages, and a commitment to continue working as a bilingual organisation.

⁴The nine protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation.

