



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

MEETING

Cabinet paper: Publication of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales

Cabinet paper CAB(22-23)41

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Decision required

1. To agree the revised LGBTQ+ Action Plan, scheduled for publication in February 2023, and
2. To endorse the launch of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan on 7 February 2023 as part of LGBT History Month 2023.

Summary

1. We want Wales to be a nation where everyone feels safe to be themselves, to be open about their sexual orientation, gender, and gender expression, at home, in work or at leisure without feeling threatened. The Programme for Government committed to make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe, and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan is seen as an important step towards achieving that aim.

2. The plan sets out the framework for LGBTQ+ policy development across government and the steps we will take to strengthen equality for LGBTQ+ people, to challenge discrimination, and to create a society where LGBTQ+ people are safe to live authentically.

3. Officials have worked collaboratively with a wide range of representatives from LGBTQ+ communities as well as the LGBTQ+ Expert Panel to inform the development of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan (Doc 1). This includes analysis of the consultation responses and stakeholder input since publication of the draft plan in July 2021. As a result, the Plan includes focussed, phased, and measurable actions that will make a substantial and positive impact to the lives of LGBTQ+ people in Wales and which have been agreed with action owners and policy leads.

4. It is suggested that a yearly update is provided to all ministers on the

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implementation of the plan.

Objective of the paper

5. The LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales (Doc 1) has been established to help coordinate action by the Welsh Government and other public bodies. The plan sets out an overarching vision to improve the lives and outcomes for LGBTQ+ people. It includes a wide range of policy-specific actions relating to human rights, education, improving safety, housing, health and social care, sport, culture, and promoting community cohesion. In particular, through this Action Plan, the Welsh Government commits to defend and promote the rights and dignity of trans and non-binary people, and to make those communities feel welcome and included in Welsh society.

Key areas of interest

Education

6. We are enabling more inclusive education, by committing to provide national guidance for schools by Summer 2023 to help schools and local authorities fully support transgender pupils. The [School Report Cymru](#) (Stonewall 2017) stated that of Welsh students aged 11-19 years, 54% of LGBT students and 73% trans students experienced bullying at school about their sexual orientation or gender.

7. Key action within the plan: Provide national trans guidance for schools and local authorities. Education officials are currently developing national guidance for schools and local authorities, to enable them to fully support the needs of trans children and young people (expected for publication in summer/September 2023).

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Health

8. Although Wales has in place its own gender service, this only caters to adults. There are currently no gender services for transgender children and young people within Wales. Therefore, they are often signposted to services in England. A **Gender identity services Inspection report** (Care Quality Commission 2019) has found that Gender Services for young people are still inadequate in England, saying that:

“ The service was difficult to access. There were over 4600 young people on the waiting list. Young people waited over two years for their first appointment. ”

9. Key actions in the plan: Continue to develop the Wales Gender Service; Review the Gender Identity Development pathway for young people in Wales.

Safety and freedom from discrimination

10. Feeling safer in Wales will allow LGBTQ+ people to thrive and live without fear, in their personal life and in society. Many LGBTQ+ people in Wales continue to feel unsafe and at a high risk of abuse or discrimination.

11. Key actions in this section of the plan which aim to address this and guarantee the safety LGBTQ+ people in Wales include:

- removing barriers to LGBTQ+ people reporting hate crime
- continued investment in hate crime prevention programmes across Wales
- to improve the relationship of LGBTQ+ communities with law enforcement authorities

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Sports and culture

12. We have seen an increase in sporting policies from international and domestic bodies which are not fully inclusive of trans people, particularly transgender women. A blanket exclusion of transgender and non-binary people sends a message to trans young people that they cannot have the same opportunities as other children, and to all young people that they have to present a certain way to be respected for who they are.

13. Key actions within the plan:

- Improve the representation, inclusion, and participation of LGBTQ+ people in sports
- Improve the access and participation of transgender people in sport.

Impact

Programme for Government

14. The action plan includes the following Programme for Government commitments:

- the support for Pride organisations across Wales
- work on gender recognition
- work on banning conversion practices

15. An integrated impact assessment has been completed for this action plan.

16. An assessment of evaluability of the plan and preliminary work towards the evaluation of its impact have currently been undertaken by the Equality

Evidence Units and their researchers (see Doc 2 for Evaluability Assessment and Evaluation).

Well-being of Future Generations Act

17. Creating a more equal Wales, where everyone has the opportunity to participate, reach their full potential and is able to contribute fully to the economy, will enable Wales to be more prosperous and innovative. The development of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan has obvious links to this goal and the More Equal Wales goal. The plan has been developed in line with the sustainable development principle and the 'five ways of working' in section 5 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. Most importantly through involvement and collaboration, lived experience of LGBTQ+ people is central to the Plan's content.

National milestones

18. Tackling inequalities is essential to the pursuit of economic and social justice. Many of Plan's actions and activities relate to social justice and social partnership, but also health care, mental health and social care; inclusive education and skills; employment, training and volunteering; and Welsh language.

Equality and Human Rights

19. Equality and Human Rights is embedded in the activities undertaken by the Equality policy team. The Equality team has actions, projects and policies which directly support and positively impact upon the Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act, 2010) to positively contribute to a fairer society through paying due regard to eliminating unlawful

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discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

20. From an international perspective, this action plan is underpinned by the Human Rights-based approach set out by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNSDG 2022) and the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IESOGI) (OHCHR 2022).

21. The plan will also contribute strongly to the Welsh Government's fulfilment of its Public Sector Equality Duty functions, under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It will link to related work on gender equality, disability, race, and other protected characteristics under this Act. We recognise the need to ensure our equality action plans work together.

Co-operation Agreement

22. The Co-operation Agreement commits to:

“ Make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe and support the publication of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan. We will call for the powers to legislate to improve the lives and protect the safety of trans people in Wales to be devolved. ”

The designated member, Sian Gwenllian MS, has been actively involved in agreeing and finalising the plan.

23. On 12 January 2023, at a Policy Committee meeting, the Designated Member and the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership formally agreed the publication of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales. This included joint agreement of the content of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan (Doc 1) and this Cabinet Paper CAB (22-23) 41.

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Communications and publication

24. The intention is for the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership to launch the LGBTQ+ Action Plan with an Oral Statement during Plenary on 7 February 2023, followed by immediate publication on the Welsh Government website. A soft launch is planned for the same day at the Senedd.

25. A press notice to highlight the cross departmental approach to deliver equality for all in Wales. It will also provide an opportunity to highlight the ongoing work with the public and give a call to action to help implement the Plan. The launch in February enables alignment with a range of events to mark LGBTQ+ History month which will further highlight the new action plan.

Recommendation

- Cabinet should agree the LGBTQ+ Action Plan set out in Doc 1, and
- Cabinet should agree that the Plan is published in February as part of LGBT History Month 2023.

Hannah Blythyn MS
Deputy Minister for Social Partnership
January 2023

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