

## Appendix 1

### Issues raised by Social and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. I would like reassurance that no discrimination takes place for the housing, job and education aspects of life, both for seen disabilities and unseen ones too (mental health). What I have recently found is a reluctance to help older disabled people, it is I feel Covid related as if there is an apathy towards older disabled. In my experience when an older resident or their family ask us for help it is a last resort and it is here that we need to be aware that those dealing with this group don't unconsciously treat those requiring help differently.

#### Response

The definition of disability includes hidden disabilities such as mental health as well as physical disabilities and sensory impairments. Discrimination on the grounds of disability is unlawful in employment and services including education. This applies to the public and private sectors. Employers and service providers have to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled customers and must not charge disabled people extra.

Schools have to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that they have to produce their own Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), complete impact assessments on policies, procedures and practices and make reasonable adjustments. The Local Education Authority has also produced an Accessibility Strategy to ensure disabled pupils can access school buildings to participate in all aspects of the curriculum and are not disadvantaged compared to non-disabled pupils.

As a local authority we have to comply with the PSED and ensure we actively think about the needs of disabled people, including older disabled people, in everything we do. Completing impact assessments is one way to demonstrate that we have taken into account their needs. All service areas should be completing these for strategic decisions, including Housing and Education and Youth.

Employment - we have achieved the Department of Work and Pensions "Disability Confident" level 2 status demonstrating our commitment to recruiting and retaining disabled employees. As part of our SEP 2020/2024 we have made a commitment to achieve level 3 status "Disability Confident Leader" which will include demonstrating how we support employees with mental health issues.

The PSED requires us to monitor the diversity profile of our workforce to identify any potential areas of inequality and take action to remove. This information is available by protected characteristic and includes disability. A range of data is produced and analysed by HR including the profile of job applicants, selection for interview, appointments, training and pay. This information is required to be published annually.

**2. There is one most important issue and that is that every private developer does not build a bungalow and should be made to because disabled and poorly people need them. Social Housing are the only ones that do it. In my opinion what I have seen is they are not thought of in planning applications because nobody thinks of transport, buses are no good unless they are a special one that accommodates a wheelchair that is occupied.**

**If, for, example, anybody pushing a wheelchair to the station in the village would take their lives in their hands. I have not asked just lately but you had to book for someone to help you on a train. Disabled Facilities Grants are still taking time for young and old. If you want to get out to go for a meal for example it is so costly for a special taxi. With disability everything is costly.**

**Flintshire do ring and Ride which is excellent and reasonable but that is for medical appointments and not for going out**

**It is not until you have to deal with it yourself that you realise what the problems are. If you are able bodied and don't come across disability it is difficult to imagine their needs.**

## **Response**

Housing has made a commitment in our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020/24 to complete a strategic review of housing needs to inform new builds, as there is recognition that there is a lack of accessible housing. We will also be reviewing waiting times for adapted housing as national research identifies that disabled people wait longer for suitable accommodation.

In addition the SEP includes a commitment by Streetscene to review the opportunities to improve access to public transport for disabled people and older people.

One of the ways we can identify potential inequalities is to monitor the profile of our customers. This helps us to understand if people with protected characteristics accessing our services are experiencing any barriers. A commitment to embed equality monitoring in Education, Social Services and Housing is included within our SEP.

An update on these will be included in our Strategic Equality Plan annual report which will be published later this year.

All services are required to produce impact assessments on plans, policies etc. and take into account the needs of disabled people. As part of this process they need to engage and consult with disabled people and groups who represent their interests, to help them understand the impact of their proposals and how to change them to reduce any negative impacts.