



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

# Galway County Council Annual Duty Action Plan 2026



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# Introduction

The Council is committed as the Public Service Leader in the County, as the Planning Authority for the County and as the only democratic platform focussed solely on County Galway to ongoing implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014. This commitment to equality and human rights is addressed to those groups covered by the grounds of gender (including gender expression, gender identity and sex characteristics); civil status; family status (including lone parents and carers); age; disability; sexual orientation; race; religion; membership of the Traveller community; and disadvantaged socio-economic status, as well as those at the intersections of these grounds, and individual rights holders under international human rights instruments. These are the identified groups for the Duty.

Our implementation of the Duty is motivated by the following ambition:

## **Dignity:**

Dignity is about respect, courtesy, fairness, and belonging. It involves equal treatment and being responsive to individual needs.

- ✓ Galway County Council promotes and supports a model of social cohesion where people and communities from the identified groups hold a status and standing as valued members of society and enjoy interactions with the wider community of respect and courtesy.
- ✓ We work to create an organisational environment where customers, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups are treated fairly, enjoy a sense of belonging, and experience relationships and interactions of respect, and where privacy is respected. We have policies in place that set standards in this regard and implement these effectively: Dignity at Work Policies and Procedures.

## **Diversity:**

Diversity is about an organisation being reflective of the society it serves and being accessible in all its functions. It involves adapting for the specific needs of the diversity of people.

- Galway County Council promotes and supports an accessible environment for the identified groups, and strives to advance, apply and enable principles and practice of universal design for infrastructure and the public realm, and for service provision and workplaces.
- We work in a manner that is accessible and flexible in making reasonable accommodation for the diversity of customers, staff and policy beneficiaries from across the identified groups, making adaptations for their specific needs within the resources available, and ensuring the systems are in place for reasonable accommodation to be implemented, and effectively communicated.

## **Participation:**

Participation is about being heard and having a say, and about engagement and collaboration. It involves being open, informing, listening to, and involving the diversity of people, and their representative organisations, in consultation and decision-making processes and in partnership endeavours.

- Galway County Council works to promote and support representative organisations

across the identified groups, and to establish and engage in, participative structures and partnership ways of working that involve people from the identified groups and their representative organisations in the development of the County.

- We work in a manner that listens to customers, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups through a range of channels, ensures that they are heard, and gives consideration to and feedback on their views. We engage people from the identified groups and their representative organisations in our decision-making and consultative processes and structures.

### **Inclusion:**

Inclusion is about the distribution of and access to resources and improving wellbeing and quality of life for the diversity of people. It involves targeting people experiencing inequality and enabling their progress and change for the better in their circumstances.

- Galway County Council strives to promote and support the full and effective participation of people and communities from the identified groups in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the County.
- We work in a manner that targets and provides assistance and resources to improve the situation and experience of people and communities from the identified groups.

This ambition is advanced through the Council's ongoing implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. The Equality and Human Rights Duty Working Group prepared an Implementation Plan for the Duty, which was adopted by the Management Team on 25 July 2023 and subsequently updated in Quarter 1 2025 to reflect the latest guidance received from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and is available on our website at <https://www.galway.ie/en/governance-administration/governance/public-sector-duty>. The Implementation Plan sets out the Council's equality and human rights values framework, the assessment of equality and human rights issues relevant to our functions, and the ongoing steps required to enable, realise and report on the Council's implementation of the Duty.

Consequently, the Directorates through their annual service delivery plans have addressed their various policy making, delivery of services, employment, procurement and funding, functions in a manner that reflects this ambition in having regard to the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. In this they will take steps to address the equality and human rights issues identified in the assessment undertaken by the Council of the equality and human rights issues relevant to the Council's functions.

In doing so they will track progress in addressing these issues such that the Council can report annually on this progress. In this, they will be supported by the Council's cross-organisational Equality and Human Rights Duty Working Group.

The Council's Equality and Human Rights Duty Working Group continues to be convened with a mandate to prepare annual plans for implementing the Duty – covering both enabling initiatives and implementation actions; provide support for the Directorates implementing the address step of the Duty; and prepare a report and organise and support reflection on the progress made and the further steps that might be taken to strengthen this.

# Annual Duty Action Plan 2026

## Corporate Services Unit

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Casual Trading Bye-Laws review

Plans, policies and actions that directly address equality and human rights issues, as part of the strategic Duty under section 42(2):

- ✓ Develop Equal Status Policy (Cust Services)

Steps that will be taken to enable implementation of the Duty, based on this implementation plan

- ✓ Preparation of the Annual Duty Action Plan 2026
- ✓ Councillors Training Plan
- ✓ PSD Training Workshops
  - Staff – 2 per annum
  - Councillors – 1 per annum
- ✓ Keep the PSD section of the website updated with current guidance and documents
- ✓ Maintain a dedicated PSD intranet page for staff (guidance, templates, resources)
- ✓ Issue quarterly communications to staff on the Duty
- ✓ Include PSD updates as a standing item at quarterly Corporate Governance Working Group meetings
- ✓ Maintain a central record of completed Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment templates

## City & County Libraries

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Strategic Review of Library Service and Galway Public Library Strategic plan 2026-2030.
- ✓ Early Years Strategy to promote and deliver public library services that support and enhance the literacy development of early years children from birth to 4 years.

Plans, policies and actions that directly address equality and human rights issues, as part of the strategic Duty under section 42(2):

- ✓ Conduct a diversity and inclusion audit on current collections to capture community demographics
- ✓ Development of an inclusive financial-literacy programme across the library network with specific focus on vulnerable adults and older people by offering trusted, community-based guidance designed to reduce barriers and increase financial wellbeing

Galway Libraries continue to deliver on Ireland's Age Friendly Library Recognition Programme by providing accessible, welcoming services shaped by the needs of older adults.

- ✓ Continue upgrading facilities to support neuro-diverse users

### **Planning Unit**

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ County Development Plan Review
- ✓ Development Contribution Scheme Review

### **Environment Unit**

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Review and develop Litter Management Plan 2026-2028

### **Housing Directorate**

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- ✓ Housing Delivery Action Plan
- ✓ Differential Rents Scheme

Plans, policies and actions that directly address equality and human rights issues, as part of the strategic Duty under section 42(2):

- ✓ Implementation of Anti-Social Behaviour Prevention Measures
- ✓ Implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme
- ✓ Implementation of the Homeless Action Plan
- ✓ Implementation of the Housing Disability Strategy

### **Community, Rural Development & Integration Unit**

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Local Sports Plan
- ✓ Outdoor Recreation Strategy
- ✓ Migrant Integration Strategy
- ✓ Arts Plan & Programme Review
- ✓ Local Enhancement Programme (Grant Scheme)

Plans, policies and actions that directly address equality and human rights issues, as part of the strategic Duty under section 42(2):

- ✓ Implementation of Arts and Disability Programme
- ✓ Implementation of the Age Friendly Strategy 2026-2031

### **Physical Infrastructure, Fire and Emergency Services, Climate Change Directorate**

Plans, policies, programmes and strategies to be reviewed or developed which will be subject to an equality and human rights impact assessment, as part of the ongoing Duty under Section 42(1):

- ✓ Athenry Active Travel Scheme
- ✓ Develop Fire Safety Strategy
- ✓ Develop Community Fire Safety Policy
- ✓ Review Section 26 Fire & Emergency Operations Plan

Steps that will be taken to enable implementation of the Duty, based on this implementation plan

- ✓ Enhance the Councils Municipal District office' capacities having full regard to the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

# Monitoring and Reporting

Implementation of the Action Plan will be underpinned by a robust monitoring and reporting process directed by the Corporate Policy Group (CPG). The CPG will consist of members of the Senior Management team, the Chairs of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), and the Cathaoirleach.

Units will be required to maintain adequate and appropriate records across the organization, documenting the steps taken to implement the Duty and their impact. These records, including a copy of the PSD Impact Assessment conducted by Units, should be submitted to the Corporate Governance Team within Corporate Services for central management. The records will be made available to the working group to demonstrate compliance with the Duty.

To ensure continuous progress, the Corporate Policy Group will receive quarterly reports from the Council's Equality and Human Rights Duty Working Group. These reports will drive the ongoing implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, detailing the progress made in addressing the equality and human rights issues relevant to the Council's functions, including those outlined in the Corporate Plan and the Annual Service Delivery Plan.

The Galway County Council Annual Report will include a report on the developments and achievements in implementing the Duty, based on a report prepared by the working group. The working group will organise or support a reflection process on this report with a view to celebrating success and to strengthening plans, policies, and actions to address the equality and human rights issues as found to be necessary.



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