

Ban Conversion Therapy

“This Council supports calls for a ban on the harmful practice commonly referred to as conversion therapy.

The Council acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the Ban Conversion Therapy NI coalition, made up of LGBTQ+ organisations, mental health charities and faith groups which are united in calling for this ban.

The Council notes the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK' which describes this practice as unethical, potentially harmful and not supported by evidence.

Further notes the Association of Christian Counsellors' stance regarding conversion therapy, which states that Reparative (or Conversion) Therapy does not fit within the ACC Ethics and Practice framework.

The Council agrees that it is fundamentally wrong to view minority sexual orientation or gender identity as something that needs fixed or cured - and that any practice, including religious practice, that is conducted with a specific pre-determined outcome, such as changing or suppressing a person sexual orientation or gender identity, is harmful and denigrating, and must be banned.

This Council will therefore write to the Minister for Communities on the following;

- To support a legislative ban on conversion therapy in all its forms, before the end of the current assembly mandate.
- That there should be no special exemptions for religious organisations in implementing a ban on conversion therapy.
- That any ban should clearly distinguish from safe and supportive therapies, delivered by suitable qualified and regulated professionals, that assist people to explore and better understand their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.”

Proposer: Councillor Flynn

Seconder: Councillor de Faoite

(To be debated by the Council)