

Assessing the Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh language and Socio-Economic Disadvantage

Please see the sheet *How to Make an Equality Impact Assessment* for assistance to complete this form. You are also welcome to contact Delyth Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708, or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru, for further assistance.

The Council is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the impact that any change in any policy or procedures (or the creation of a new policy or procedure) will have on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has additional general duties to ensure fairness and to foster good relationships. Therefore, a timely assessment should be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

The Council is also required, under the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to consider the impact that any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use made of the Welsh language.

From 1 April 2021, the Council has a duty to give due attention to addressing socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

1) Details

1.1 What is the name of the policy / service in question?

Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (CNEP)

1.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service that is being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

To provide guidance to the elected members and workforce of Gwynedd Council and to the residents of Gwynedd more widely on the action needed for the Council's carbon emissions to reach net-zero by 2030.

The CNEP explains why there is a need to respond to the impacts of climate change that have already occurred as well as why global temperature increases need to be reduced into the future. Following on from that, it explains what steps the council will take to change its working arrangements to reduce its carbon emissions and to increase the carbon absorption capacity of the lands it owns.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Bethan Richardson - (Acting) Climate Change Programme Manager

1.4 When did you commence the assessment? Which version is this?

Version I - February 2022

2) Action

2.1 Who are the stakeholders or partners whom we will have to work with to carry out this assessment?

All residents of Gwynedd will be affected by global warming, but there are some climate change impacts that are going to have a greater impact on some residents than others, e.g.: residents living in areas that are more likely to be flooded or residents living in fuel poverty. The CNEP needs to be implemented in conjunction with a number of other organisations and with communities across Gwynedd. Though the plan in its current guise focuses on changing working practices and provision by the council itself, over the coming year we will discuss with other organisations and Gwynedd communities how we can extend the plan.

2.2 What steps have you taken to engage with people with protected characteristics, regarding the Welsh language or with communities (either due to location or due to need), who are living with a socio-economic disadvantage?

We have been consulting with communities across Gwynedd about their priorities to regenerate their local area through the Local Regeneration (Area Ni) plan. That work has been carried out on-line and face-to-face (following Covid-19 rules) to give as many people as possible the opportunity to contribute. The need to respond to climate and nature problems has been identified in each area, and we will go back to discuss further with local communities how the council can best work with other communities and organisations to try to overcome the challenges.

We have been consulting with communities directly affected by flood risk, and have drawn up plans to respond to that threat in conjunction with those communities – taking into account the needs of all residents.

We will engage more widely with partners across all sectors, and with local communities, during 2022/23 to further develop the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan. We will engage with certain communities of people – e.g. users of community food hub schemes, to ensure

that our projects address their needs as well as the aim of reducing food waste.

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

The engagement on flood response plans has led to the creation of plans to respond to a flood incident. Engagement on the Local Regeneration plan has highlighted that communities are keen to take action to reduce the impact of climate change.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence are you acting?

We have data on how much of Gwynedd's population, and what the infrastructure is, at risk of flooding. We know that the population demographics of some areas likely to be flooded mean that a high number of older people will be affected. We will produce separate Equality Impact Assessments on some of the individual projects within the CNEP and may highlight further evidence.

2.5 Are there any gaps in the evidence that needs to be collected?

The Census provides us with data on the demographics of geographical communities but will not provide us with full information on each of the 5 protected characteristics. We would need to keep track of further information about characteristics such as sexual orientation or belief/religion as we hold consultations with communities, and act on any evidence that these are not being given due attention. As the CNEP will be reviewed by 2023/24 we will also adapt this Equality Impact Assessment, and address any weaknesses.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must duly address the impact that any changes will have on people with the following equality characteristics. What impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics? There is also a need to consider the impact on the socio-economic disadvantage and on the Welsh language.

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	None identified	There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.
Disability	Positive	While the consequences of climate change affect all people,

		<p>not responding to the consequences would affect disabled people worse than the rest of the population.</p> <p>The CNEP seeks to respond to problems caused by flooding, hoping to reduce the likelihood of flooding in the first place, and plans how to respond when flooding events arise. These response plans take account of the need to offer suitable or additional support to disabled people.</p> <p>The Local Flood Strategy, which will be developed during 2022 and will contribute to the CNEP, will take account of creating easy access for disabled people when planning flood defences.</p> <p>Our plans to install electric car charging points across the county will increase the accessibility of residents living in rural communities to low or zero carbon transport. They will be able to use electric vehicles adapted to their needs without having to rely on a fossil fuel motor. It will be necessary to be aware, at the same time, that the charging points are being installed in places that are accessible and safe for disabled people.</p> <p>The council also encourages staff and elected members to prioritise virtual methods of holding meetings and to carry out their work. This can increase the opportunities for disabled people to carry out their work from home, or from a location convenient to them, without having to travel to a location such as an office. On the other hand, we will also need to ensure that disabled people are suitably equipped to carry out their work from home safely and efficiently.</p> <p>Our active travel plans and biodiversity projects contribute positively to the mental well-being and health of residents and visitors to Gwynedd. Access to nature and green spaces has been proven to be a positive factor in maintaining healthy mental health.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that disabled people have access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p> <p>New individual projects listed in the CNEP will carry out their own equality impact assessments.</p>
Gender	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to</p>

		ensure that a person's gender will not be a barrier to them having access to any event so that we can gather their views.
Age	Positive	<p>If we do not respond to the effects of climate change and reduce the likelihood of global warming, then young and older age groups will be affected worse than others. These two age groups would need additional support to protect themselves – e.g. in cases of flooding; to find food if there is a threat to our ability to grow crops; to travel if there is no public transport.</p> <p>Our active travel schemes, plans to grow and plant trees and create nature habitats are going to help the education and well-being of both age groups.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that a person's age will not be a barrier to them having access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p> <p>New individual projects listed in the CNEP will carry out their own equality impact assessments.</p>
Sexual orientation	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that a person's sexual orientation will not be a barrier to them having access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p>
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that a person's religion or belief will not be a barrier to them having access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p>
Gender reassignment	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p>

Pregnancy and maternity	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that pregnancy will not be a barrier to having access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider. We will be consulting further on the CNEP during 2022/23 with the communities of Gwynedd – via on-line and face-to-face methods. A number of the consultations will be held in conjunction with discussions on the Local Regeneration/Ardal Ni plans and we will therefore need to ensure that this feature will not be a barrier to someone having access to any event so that we can gather their views.</p>
The Welsh language	Positive	<p>All schemes named in the CNEP will be maintained and promoted in Welsh or bilingually in accordance with the Council's language policy.</p> <p>The CNEP will contribute to regional plans to improve 'green' energy and transport infrastructure and therefore all communities – rural and urban – should benefit equally. Our plans to install electric car charging points across the county will increase the accessibility of residents living in rural communities to low or zero carbon transport. All of this will mean that Welsh-speaking residents can continue to live in their local communities.</p>
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive	<p>In line with the Welsh Government's intention in Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) our approach to reducing carbon emissions should not have a greater impact on some sections of society than others – i.e. we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'.</p> <p>The CNEP encourages the use of electric private cars, but also recognises that, at present at least, their cost is beyond the reach of a large number of people. We will therefore also work with others to develop a network of low carbon public transport.</p> <p>Many of the individual schemes, as well as trying to reduce waste, also seek to reduce financial poverty. The 'repair café' schemes, Community food hubs, and our support for partners supporting residents with fuel poverty will all help residents who are under socio-economic disadvantage.</p>

* To be deleted as required

3.2 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to contribute positively to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in its activities in the fields of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, transgender, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must duly address the way any change impacts on these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?*	In what way? What is the evidence?
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes	The plan as a whole and the individual schemes should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual schemes will need to identify any matters to consider.
Promote equal opportunities	Yes	In line with the Welsh Government's intention in Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'. In engaging on and through the implementation of the CNEP we will ensure that everyone has equal access to information on the impacts of climate change and can contribute to the debate in the field.
Foster good relationships	Yes	In engaging on and through the implementation of the CNEP we will ensure that everyone has equal access to information on the impacts of climate change and can contribute to the debate in the field. By negotiating solutions to the problems of climate change we can bring communities closer together.

* To be deleted as required

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English, and that every opportunity to promote the Welsh language is taken (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

In addition to the information under the headings of 'the Welsh language' in 3.1, the CNEP will promote the Welsh language through the following actions –
 All information and advertising signs and materials will be published bilingually with Welsh first, in line with the Council's language policy.
 Projects in the field of 'land use' and 'ecology' targeted at children and young people will increase their knowledge and confidence in the Welsh language outside the classroom.
 We will work with community organisations to carry out activities that will teach about climate change and on practical projects to respond to the effects of climate change – all

through the medium of Welsh and English, with the Welsh language being given priority.

3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice so as to have a positive impact on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language, and to reduce or prevent any detrimental impacts that the policy/practice could have on the Welsh language?

In monitoring the plan we will look for any problems that might have suggested that the council's language policy is not being followed, and correct that.

3.5 How does the proposal show that you have given due regard to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage? (Please note that this relates to closing the inequality gap, rather than improving outcomes for everyone only).

In line with the Welsh Government's intention in [Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 \(2021-25\)](#) our approach to reducing carbon emissions should not have a greater impact on some sections of society than others – i.e. we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'. The CNEP encourages the use of electric private cars, but also recognises that, at present at least, their cost is beyond the reach of a large number of people. We will therefore also work with others to develop a network of low carbon public transport. Many of the individual schemes, as well as trying to reduce waste, also seek to reduce financial poverty. The 'repair café' schemes, Community food hubs, and our support for partners supporting residents with fuel poverty will all help residents who are under socio-economic disadvantage.

3.6 What measures or other changes can you include to strengthen or change the policy / custom to show that you have given due regard to the need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Socio-Economic Act?

We will consult with Gwynedd residents on the content of the CNEP during 2022/23, and as we are also reviewing the plan annually we will incorporate any changes that need to be made by the revised version for 2023/24. This will be in addition to the schemes referred to in 3.2 and 3.5.

The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.

4) Analysing the results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the above? What is the reason for this?

The CNEP has had a positive impact on all equality characteristics, or no impact has been identified. Equality impact assessments will be completed for individual projects. The impact of climate change hits all members of society, and so as we plan our response to those impacts we deliver on the basis of different needs – e.g. flood defences and response plans.

4.2 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the above? What is the reason for this?

No significant negative impacts have been identified for the CNEP as a whole, but equality impact assessments will be completed for individual projects.

4.3 What should be done?

Select one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	X
Revise the policy to remove any barriers	
Suspend and abolish the policy as the harmful impacts are too great	
Continue with the policy as any harmful impact can be justified	
No further steps at present, it is premature to decide, or there is insufficient evidence	

4.4 If you continue with the plan, what steps will you take to reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

This is not relevant to the Plan in its entirety.

4.5 If you are not taking any further action to remove or reduce the negative impacts, please explain why here.

This is not relevant to the Plan in its entirety.

5) Monitoring

5.1 What steps will you take to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy or service (action plan)?

This plan will be monitored regularly through the Council's internal performance monitoring arrangements, and information on the development of the plan will be shared publicly through Cabinet Members' Performance Reports to Cabinet meetings, and through Gwynedd Council's Annual Performance Report. We have a Climate Change Board that provides strategic leadership to the work, and includes the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, Biodiversity Champion and a representative from the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

One element of the regular monitoring is the collection of data on emission levels and carbon absorption, and we will do so by following the Welsh Government's methodology ([Welsh Public Sector Guide for Zero Net Carbon Reporting](#)) while also adapting our methodology if guidance is issued to do so. Annual data results will form part of Gwynedd Council's Annual Performance Report, and following their publication we will also review this plan to ensure that we are on track to achieve our ambition by 2030.

In reviewing the CNEP for 2022/23 we will also review this Equality Impact Assessment.