

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 changes to any policy or procedure (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 must 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?

The Council Plan 2023-28

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

The purpose of the Council's Plan is to identify priorities and key areas to implement between 2023 and 2028. This is the first year of the new Plan. The previous version of the Plan (the Plan for 2018-23) was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 8 March 2018.

The new Plan states our vision for the next 5 years, and then every annual review will offer an update that summarises where we have reached on the journey, and what our priorities will be for the year to come.

This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Each individual project within the Plan is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire project and/or for specific sections of it. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake the Assessment(s).

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Dewi Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager, Leadership Team

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

January 2023 – version 1, full assessment of the Plan.

2) Action

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

Elected Members, service users, Gwynedd residents.

2.2 What steps have you taken to engage with people who have 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?

A consultation was undertaken during December 2022 and January 2023 to introduce and explain the draft priorities to the public, partners and local organisations and raise awareness of the opportunity for them to participate in the exercise by completing a short on-line questionnaire at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/consultations Paper copies were also available in local libraries and Siopau Gwynedd.

We encouraged as many as possible of Gwynedd's residents to complete and return the questionnaire by using the Council's website, the local press, spreading the message through our partners, social media websites and elected members' e-newsletter and Council staff.

We contacted organisations that represent or work with people and/or children with equality characteristics to inform them of the engagement and to ask them to notify their users of the

questionnaire.

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

The consultation remained open from 8 December 2022 until 3 January 2023.

We received 643 responses to the questionnaire. On the whole, respondents agreed with the priority areas and the projects and there were no specific concerns relating to the equality characteristics.

The following table shows the number of respondents per area – Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.

Area	Number	Percentage
Arfon	282	43.9%
Dwyfor	137	21.3%
Meirionnydd	203	31.6%
Outside Gwynedd	9	1.4%
No response	12	1.9%
Total	643	100.0%

The respondents were asked to answer questions about their equality features (optional) and the information gathered was as follows:

Gender

	Number	Percentage
Man / Male	267	41.5
Woman / Female	313	48.7
I identify in a different way	1	0.2
I prefer not to say	47	7.3
No response	15	2.3
Total	643	100.0

Age

	Number	Percentage
15 years old or younger	4	0.6
16 - 24 years old	11	1.7
25 - 34 years old	59	9.2
35 - 44 years old	60	9.3
45 - 54 years old	119	18.5
55 - 64 years old	162	25.2
65 - 74 years old	128	19.9
75 - 84 years old	38	5.9

85 + years old	4	0.6
I prefer not to say	46	7.2
No response	12	1.9
Total	643	100.0

Do you understand, speak, read and/or write in Welsh?

	Number	Percentage
Speak Welsh	329	51.2
Can understand Welsh verbally	281	43.7
Read Welsh	279	43.4
Write in Welsh	243	37.8
I do not understand Welsh (none of the above)	107	16.6
I prefer not to say	66	10.3
Other	75	11.7
Multiple choice question		

Nationality or national identity

	Number	Percentage
Welsh	304	47.3
English	83	12.9
Scottish	5	0.8
Northern Irish	1	0.2
British	161	25.0
I prefer not to say	46	7.2
Other	30	4.7
No response	13	2.0
Total	643	100.0

Race

	Number	Percentage
White	556	86.5
Black / African / Caribbean	0	0.0
Asian	1	0.2
Gypsy / Irish traveller	2	0.3
Mixed / several ethnic groups	8	1.2
I prefer not to say	57	8.9
Other	7	1.1
No response	12	1.9
Total	643	100.0

What is your religion?

	Number	Percentage
No religion	238	37.0
Christian	286	44.5
Muslim	0	0.0
Buddhist	4	0.6
Hindu	0	0.0
Jewish	3	0.5
Sikh	0	0.0
I prefer not to say	71	11.0
Other	26	4.0
No response	15	2.3
Total	643	100.0

Which of the following describes you best?

	Number	Percentage
Heterosexual / Straight	506	78.7
Gay man	10	1.6
Gay woman/lesbian	8	1.2
Bisexual	10	1.6
I prefer not to say	79	12.3
Other	10	1.6
No response	20	3.1
Total	643	100.0

Has your gender identity changed from what you were assigned at birth?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	1.6
No	541	84.1
I prefer not to say	67	10.4
No response	25	3.9
Total	643	100.0

It was not possible to identify a trend in the responses for any of the equality characteristics.

Individual projects should use the information gathered and engage further with the residents of Gwynedd as required.

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

As part of the process of drawing up the Council Plan for 2023-28, in July 2022 the Heads of Department were asked to identify and consider potential priorities and schemes for the next five years. In order to do this, consideration was given to several pieces of work/information,

including the projects that were in the current 2022-23 Plan, feedback from engagement on the 'Ardal Ni' Regeneration Framework, and the Well-being Assessments by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board.

In addition, in October 2022 a workshop was held with the Cabinet Members to discuss potential schemes for the new Plan.

Two further workshop sessions were held with elected members in December 2022 in order to give local members the opportunity to express their views and to highlight any additional issues that needed addressing.

To ensure that we meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd, we decided to engage on the 2023-28 version of the Plan with the public during December 2022 – January 2023. This was an opportunity for residents, businesses, groups and organisations, elected members, and City, Town and Community Councils to have their say on the draft priorities.

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

The Council's Departments are responsible for implementing the individual schemes within the Council Plan. The Council's performance-challenge processes, where the Cabinet Member and members of scrutiny committees challenge the progress and development of the work being carried out on the Plan, is continuous work throughout the year. The reports on these performance challenge meetings are published as part of the Cabinet's meeting papers.

If it is necessary to change the content or direction of any individual project then the Equality Impact Assessment will be revisited for that project.

The Council Plan 2023-28 together with the Equality Impact Assessment are submitted to the Cabinet and the Council for scrutiny and will be reviewed annually.

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 effect will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics? We must also consider the impact on socio-economic disadvantage and on the Welsh language.

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including	Positive	The Council's Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-28 will give

nationality)		<p>particular regard to any matters arising from the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" within the Council Plan will act on every characteristic, including race.</p>
Disability	Positive	<p>Care is a priority area, therefore it is expected to have a positive impact. All other individual schemes are expected to look at the impact on disability when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>9.8% (N=63) of the respondents to the public consultation noted that they have a disability.</p> <p>A higher percentage of the respondents who noted that they have a disability (95.2%, N=60) agreed with Priority Area 3 compared with the proportion of the total number who responded to the consultation (85.1%, N=547).</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including disability.</p>
Gender	Positive	<p>There is one specific individual plan in this area namely "Women in Leadership" therefore a positive impact is expected here. Nevertheless, it is not possible to identify the impact of the Plan in its entirety without completing impact assessments on the other individual schemes.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including gender.</p>
Age	Positive	<p>Age is prioritised in a number of fields therefore we expect the Plan to have a positive impact on children, young people and older people.</p> <p>Each individual plan is expected to look at the impact on different ages when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>91.3% of the respondents to the public consultation agreed with Priority Area 1.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including age.</p>
Sexual orientation	Positive	<p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including sexual orientation.</p>

Religion or belief (or non-belief)	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including religion.
Gender reassignment	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including gender reassignment.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including pregnancy and maternity.
Marriage and civil partnership	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including marriage and civil partnership.
The Welsh language	Uncertain at present because of a lack of evidence	<p>There is a specific priority within the Council Plan that involves promoting the use of the Welsh language, with two projects identified under that priority. There are a number of individual projects within the Council that contribute to the Council's strategic objective of promoting the use of the Welsh Language. As no individual assessments have been prepared/submitted for the individual projects, it is very difficult at this point to assess the impact of the entire Plan on the Welsh language and its speakers, whether positive or negative.</p> <p>Each individual plan is expected to study the impact on the Welsh language when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>66.9% of the respondents to the public consultation agreed with Priority Area 5.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including language.</p>
Socio-economic Disadvantage	Positive	<p>The Council is aware that a number of Gwynedd residents are living in unequal living conditions due to socio-economic disadvantage. Therefore, a number of the projects that are already included in the Council Plan relate to reducing socio-economic disadvantage. Examples of projects are noted below:</p> <p>Employment – Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for businesses and community enterprises to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work</p> <p>Education – Transforming education for children in their early years</p>

		<p>Health – Quality Specialist Care</p> <p>Justice and Standards of Living – Supporting People's Well-being</p>
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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 priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.
Promote equal opportunities	Yes	The priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.
Foster good relations	Yes	The priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.

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 language, and that every opportunity is taken to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

Project – Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children

It is essential that learners who are latecomers get the opportunity to learn Welsh as soon as possible, through a first-rate modern provision that is spread across Wales. It is essential that learners who are less confident in Welsh also have an opportunity to gain confidence and to

improve their Welsh skills with the support of the Immersion Education System. We also wish to see our language immersion methods extended to support the Welsh language expanded in schools that serve communities where opportunities to use Welsh in the home and outside school are limited. This project in cooperation with the Immersion System and our schools will give all our learners the best opportunity to become confident Welsh speakers who can use the language in all aspects of life.

Project – Promote the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd

We will conduct specific projects that will promote the use of Welsh and increase the opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community. This will include increasing the use of the Welsh language when dealing with public and community services.

Information from the individual Impact Assessments will provide further information around how the projects will operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards.

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?

The purpose of the Council's Plan is to identify priorities and key areas to implement between 2023 and 2028. This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Each individual project is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire project and/or for specific sections of it. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake these Assessment(s). These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to promote the Welsh language in their areas.

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 only improving outcomes for everyone).

The following are examples of projects that are included in the Plan which respond to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage:

Employment – Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for businesses and community enterprises to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work.

We will support businesses and community enterprises in Gwynedd to thrive in many ways such as developing produce and accessing new markets, helping enterprises to save money by reducing waste and make better use of technology, supporting businesses in Gwynedd to trade together and prioritise helping enterprises that commit to paying a 'real living wage' to their

employees. We will promote businesses to make the most of the Welsh language, will develop more business units to let, and will strive to ensure that the North Wales Growth Deal projects benefit the people of Gwynedd. In addition, we will help the people of Gwynedd to fulfil their potential and support those who are excluded from the labour market to return to employment and will work with employers to help them to ensure they have a sufficient workforce.

Education – Transforming education for children in their early years.

The early years are key to children's social development, and the importance of this phase was particularly evident during the pandemic. We wish to transform this service and will collaborate with the health service and Mudiad Meithrin in order to ensure that all of the county's children have the best possible start to their time in education.

Health – Quality Specialist Care.

We will ensure that appropriate and specialist care is available in a timely manner; across all our care provisions.

Amongst our plans are:

- Securing a sufficient nursing and dementia provision across the county which includes developing nursing beds at the Penrhos site, Pwllheli
- Ensuring that we work jointly with the Health Board to enable us to deliver what is important for Gwynedd adults.
- Developing our mental health services to ensure sufficient emphasis on individuals' well-being.
- Strengthening our ability to support care providers to maintain a quality service for the residents of Gwynedd.
- Contributing to the Planning the Workforce project to ensure that the particular challenges and opportunities in the care field are duly addressed.
- Implementing new Liberty Protection Safeguards arrangements to protect the rights of persons receiving care in the county.

Justice and Standards of Living – Support People's Well-being.

Some residents find it difficult to cope with life's challenges and the situation of a number of residents has been exacerbated as a result of the cost of living crisis. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to keep healthy.

We have a wide network throughout our communities which helps and supports residents to cope and to respond to their various needs. This network needs support to sustain that voluntary effort, and we will work to strengthen this essential work over the coming years.

3.6 What other measures or changes can you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice to demonstrate 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?

Each individual project is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire

project and/or for specific sections of it, and this will include assessing the socio-economic disadvantage. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake these Assessment(s). These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to reduce inequality as a result of socio-economic disadvantage in their fields.

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?

It appears that the priority areas should have a significant, positive impact on many of the equality characteristics. Each individual equality impact assessment is expected to look at the impact in greater detail. This is particularly true if Covid considerations are to be fully considered in their impact assessments.

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 with the Plan as a whole. Each individual impact assessment looks at the impact in greater detail.

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

The individual assessments identify any negative impacts and the steps to mitigate them.

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

We have not identified any actions for the Plan as a whole, but it will be taken into consideration in the individual assessments.

5) Monitoring

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

The Council's Departments are responsible for implementing the individual schemes within the Council Plan. The Council's performance-challenging processes, where the Cabinet Member and members of scrutiny committees challenge the progress and development of the work being carried out on the Plan, is continuous work throughout the year. The reports on these performance challenge meetings are published as part of the Cabinet's meeting papers.

If it is necessary to change the content or direction of any individual project then the Equality Impact Assessment will be revisited for that project.

The Council Plan 2023-28 together with the Equality Impact Assessment are submitted to the Cabinet and the Council for scrutiny and will be reviewed annually.