

Equality Impact Assessment

Please see the *How to do an Equality Impact Assessment* leaflet for help in completing this form. You are welcome to contact Delyth Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708, or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru, for further help.

The Council is required (under Equality Act 2010) to consider the impact of a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new one) on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has additional general duties set out in part 2b. A timely equality impact assessment must therefore be made before making a decision on any relevant change (i.e. one that affects people with a specific protected characteristic).

1 Details

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

Cyngor Gwynedd Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy.

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

The aim of the strategy is to reduce the risk to people and communities from flooding and coastal erosion, in line with Welsh Governments' National Strategy.

The Local Strategy has 5 main objectives which include:

- 1: To aim to reduce the level of flood and coastal erosion risk to the residents of Gwynedd
- 2: To further develop an understanding of the flood risk to Gwynedd and the impacts of climate change
- 3: To continue to work with all relevant bodies to ensure appropriate and sustainable development in Gwynedd
- 4: Raising awareness of local flood and coastal erosion risk
- 5: Working collaboratively with all other Risk Management Authorities and relevant groups/bodies to ensure a coordinated response to flood and coastal erosion events.

Each of the five objectives have an underlying set of actions that will be implemented in order to achieve the overarching objectives. These can be found on page 55 of the Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (draft version).

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

YGC, Cyngor Gwynedd

1.4 When did you begin the assessment? What version is this?

This assessment has been carried out alongside the first draft version of the strategy in December 2023 and reviewed in May 2024. Any additional considerations from this assessment will be incorporated into the final draft of the strategy.

2) Implementation

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

This assessment is carried out by YGC, on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd as the Lead Local Flood Authority and authors of the Local Strategy. In order to achieve and implement the conclusions of this report, Gwynedd will be working alongside other Risk Management Authorities (RMA) to deliver the Local Strategy. The findings of this assessment will be adopted into the ways of working, with all parties involved informed and made aware.

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?

The Draft Local Strategy will be consulted upon with the public of Gwynedd. A consultation questionnaire will be made available on the Cyngor Gwynedd website with paper copies also available if needed.

Gwynedd residents will be encouraged to participate in the questionnaire through the Council website, local press, social media, staff forums and councillors' forum.

Specific questions on the Welsh language and socio-economic characteristics will be included within the questionnaire.

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

77 responses were received to the consultation.

In terms of age selection of respondents 29% belonged to the 65-74 age group, with 23% belonging to the 55-64 age group. 24% of respondents were aged between 16 and 54 followed by 14% aged over 75. 10% of respondents indicated a preference not

to specify their age group.

As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to answer what they believe will be the impact of the strategy on the Welsh language, the opportunities for its use and its status within the community. 69% reported a neutral effect with 15.5% indicating a positive effect and 15.5% indicating a negative effect. Some, as a relevant rationale to the question identified points such as the need to hold open meetings with the Community Councils and modify the report for good, need to communicate in a language of residents' choice etc.

Respondents were also asked if they thought the introduction of the Draft Local Flooding Strategy was likely to have an impact on socio-economically disadvantaged people, This was an open-ended question and 30 of the 77 responded to this question. The range of responses included comments such as:

- *"Will have a good effect if it works"*
- *"The poorest in society usually suffer the most"*
- *"People with lower income levels will need more help protecting their homes"*
- *"Yes, it should help them"*

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

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy derives from The Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The act requires all 22 Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) in Wales to produce a Local Strategy. Wales also has a higher-level National Strategy.

The Welsh Government's *National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) in Wales (National Strategy)* sets out that over 245,000 properties across Wales are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water, with almost 400 properties also at risk from coastal erosion. The National Strategy explains that, as the climate changes, we can expect those risks to increase, with more frequent and severe floods, rising sea levels and faster rates of erosion of the coast.

The National Strategy sets out the legislative context to FCERM activities in Wales. In certain cases, Local Authorities are also required to produce Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP), under the 2009 Flood Risk Regulations.

Gwynedd's first Local Strategy was published in 2014, setting out the overarching approach to managing local flood risk. Alongside the Local Strategy, a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) was published. The FRMP developed the objectives and high-level actions outlined in the Local Strategy into a more detailed plan for managing flooding.

The Local Strategy relevant to this assessment is the second Local Strategy, which includes both the elements of the Local Strategy and FRMP within one document in order to reduce complexity and to enable a more effective means of communicating the Strategy.

Present day and future risks associated with flooding and coastal erosion is identified

within the second Local Strategy. The aim is to make the reader aware of all sources of flooding within their community, rather than focusing solely on the sources for which Cynfor Gwynedd act as an RMA (Risk Management Authority).

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

The Council and Risk Management Authorities (RMA) are responsible for developing and implementing plans derived from the Local Strategy.

All projects resulting from the Local Strategy will consider the characteristics of equality and Welsh language considerations during the development phase.

This assessment will be reviewed annually and/or in accordance with any legislative changes.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must duly address the impact that any changes will have on people with 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 nationality)	Positive	<p>The aim of the local strategy is to reduce local flood risk to all.</p> <p>The objectives that are relevant to this characteristic are mainly objectives 1, 2 and 4 and reduction of the impacts will be carried through the underpinning actions 1.1, 1.2, 2.2A and 2.4B. The implementation steps can be seen in fill on page 55 on the Flood Strategy.</p> <p>The strategy will consider people of all groups within the communication strategy and whilst preparing community flood plans. The strategy will develop the communication and engagement strategy for each individual scheme that derives from the strategy, to encourage people of all characteristics within the community to take a more proactive approach to flood prevention and resilience.</p> <p>The implementation of this Strategy will be monitored closely and updated in line with service requirements.</p>

The Welsh language	Neutral	<p>The work that the strategy proposes will not have a direct positive impact on the Welsh language due to the nature of the works, however, the Welsh language will be at the forefront of the communication element. The strategy will be implemented bilingually with all associated documentation available in both Welsh and English. The strategy will also promote the Welsh language within the community (Objective 4 in particular), allowing both the strategy and associated actions to be communicated through Welsh and also allowing a safe space for both staff working on the strategy and residents to practice, speak and learn Welsh.</p>
Disability	Positive	<p>The reduction of flood risk will have a positive impact on disabled individuals. This category is considered highly vulnerable in a flood event as they may be less able to prepare for and respond to flooding. In addition, there is the emotional recovery associated with flooding.</p> <p>Every effort will be made during the development of each individual scheme that derives from the Strategy to understand the needs of the community and identify if there are any adapted housing etc within the vicinity – and respond to them within the schemes.</p> <p>Objectives 1, 4 and 5 in particular, and their associated actions aim to ensuring robust flood protection plans and effective communication and engagement mechanisms.</p>
Gender	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that this strategy will have a negative or positive impact on this characteristic, however, the implementation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and updated accordingly in line with service requirements.</p>
Age	Positive	<p>The aim of the strategy is to reduce local flood risk to all. The reduction of flood risk will have the greatest positive impact on both the younger generation and the elderly. These age categories are considered particularly vulnerable in a flood event as they may be less able to prepare and respond.</p> <p>Gwynedd is a county that is seeing an increasing percentage of an ageing population. The Strategy will therefore identify the type of demographics in those areas at risk in order to plan any considerations into the individual projects that will result from the Strategy, when appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Objectives 1, 4 and 5 in particular, and their associated actions aim to ensuring robust flood protection plans and effective communication and engagement mechanisms.</p>
Sexual orientation	Neutral	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that this strategy will have a negative or positive impact on this characteristic, however, the implementation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and updated accordingly in line with</p>

		service requirements.
Religion or belief (or lack of belief)	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that this strategy will have a negative or positive impact on this characteristic, however, the implementation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and updated accordingly in line with service requirements. Every effort will be made within the individual schemes that derive from the strategy to identify places of worship and consider them within the schemes.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that this strategy will have a negative or positive impact on this characteristic, however, the implantation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and updated accordingly in line with service requirements.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	Pregnant people and those on maternity are also considered highly vulnerable when it comes to flood risk and flooding events. It is considered that the strategy will have a positive impact on this category as the strategy will encourage more consideration and inclusion of this group when developing and communicating projects. Objectives 1, 4 and 5 in particular, and their associated actions aim to reduce distress and community disruption to all, through ensuring robust flood protection plans and effective communication and engagement mechanisms.
Marriage and civil partnership	None	There is no evidence to suggest that this strategy will have a negative or positive impact on this characteristic, however, the implementation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and updated accordingly in line with service requirements.

* delete as appropriate

3.2 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to contribute positively to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relationships 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	No	Not applicable

Promote equal opportunities	No	Not applicable to this type of strategy, however, the strategy is focused on communication and building good relationships with both RMA and the community in order to build flood resilience.
Foster good relationships	No	Not applicable to this type of strategy however the strategy is focused on communication and building good relationships with both RMA and the community in order to build flood resilience.

* delete as appropriate

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the requirements of 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?

The strategy will provide opportunities to promote and encourage the use of the Welsh language within both the community, between RMA's and other associated partners. This will be done primarily through increasing the use of the Welsh language when dealing with the public and risk management authorities.

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?

One of the priority fields within Cyngor Gwynedd's Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd 2018-23 is increasing the presence and use of the Welsh language within the community. The strategy will contribute towards this priority field through all aspects of the work, in particular through Objectives 2 and 4 (listed below).

Objective 2: Further developing an understanding of flood risk and the effects of climate change in Gwynedd.

Objective 4: Raise awareness of local flood and coastal erosion risk.

This assessment will look at the Local Strategy in its entirety.

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).

Of the vulnerable groups that are classified within the socio-economic disadvantaged category, the following groups are considered relevant in regard to the Local Strategy.

Low income / income poverty

Low and / or no wealth

Area deprivation

Material deprivation

The Strategy aims to have a positive impact on those experiencing low income / income poverty by alleviating and managing the likelihood and consequences of flooding to those communities at highest risk. Low income individuals are potentially less able to prepare for and recover from flood events, particularly due to the costs associated with flood damages, insurance premiums and flood preventative equipment.

The strategy has taken this into account and aims to mitigate the above impacts through the development of an effective communication pathway that will allow for a two way dialogue between the Council and residents in regards to flood risk. The Strategy aims to carry out regular engagement (through the individual schemes that will derive from the Strategy) to improve both individual and communities ability to prepare, respond and recover to the impacts of flooding.

Look for opportunities to educate and raise awareness of flood risk from a school age onwards to try and ensure that all age groups receive the information.

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

It is expected of each individual scheme that derives from the Local Strategy to give due regard to the need of considering socio-economic disadvantages and look for further ways to reduce inequalities through the implementation of the project.

4) Analysing the results

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

It is not considered that the strategy will have a significant positive impact on any of the equality characteristics or general duties, however, there will small positive indirect impacts as a result of increase in more robust flood defences, safety and understanding of flooding and prevention. The Local Strategy also aims to build greater resilience within the whole community in order to be able to deal with the risk of flooding.

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

No, the plan is not likely to have a substantial negative impact on any of the equality characteristics. The Strategy is likely to have a positive impact.

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?

YGC will continue to work closely with the Equality Officer during the development of the Draft Strategy and beyond. The equality aspect will be continuously reviewed and adapted in line with any changes within the Strategy itself and in line with legislation.

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

Not applicable.

5) Monitoring

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

Each relevant scheme that derives from the strategy will be subject to a form of Equality Impact Assessment, that will be agreed upon between YGC and the Equality Officer. This is to ensure consistency and a level of accountability across all projects that derive from the Strategy, where possible to do so.