

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, Revision 2026/27

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 fourth year of the Plan. The original version of the Plan was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2 March 2023.

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.

Here are the changes made to the 2026/27 Revision:

The following new Section has been added:

Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice

- Due to the importance of this work, the desire to include the introduction of the new section to acknowledge the work of the Response Plan was noted. The purpose of the Response Plan is to explain how the Council will do everything within its power to ensure that such crime does not happen again in Gwynedd and that arrangements to Safeguard children and young people are of the highest possible standard.

The following New Priority Field has been added:

Equal Gwynedd – two projects under An Effective Gwynedd will be moved here (**Ensure fairness for all** and **Women in Leadership**)

The scope or content of the following project has changed:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- **Extending opportunities for socialising for the county's children and young people** - modifications to the project overview.

Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd

- **Create the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for business and community enterprise to thrive.**
- **Regenerating communities and town centres.**
- **Keeping the Benefit Local**

- modifications to the projects overview.

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- **Managing second homes and short-term holiday accommodation**

- modifications to the project overview.

Priority Area: A Caring Gwynedd

- **Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community.**
- **Autism Plan.**
- **Llechen Lân.**

- modifications to the projects overview.

Priority Area: An Effective Gwynedd

- **Developing the Council's Culture**

- modifications to the project overview.

The following projects have been newly added:

Priority Area: A Welsh Gwynedd

- **Back to Gwynedd**

Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd

- **Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy**

The following project has transferred to being part of the day-to-day work of the relevant Department during 2026/27:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- Promoting the well-being of children and young people and reducing the cost of sending children to school.

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty.

Priority Area: A Welsh Gwynedd

- Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children.

Priority Area: A Green Gwynedd

- Clean and Tidy Communities
- Public Transport

Priority Area: An Effective Gwynedd

- Strategic review of Health and Safety management.
- Workforce Planning.
- Managing the impact of national budgetary cuts.

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.
This is version 4 – February 2026 – 2026/27 Revision 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.

Council Plan review workshops were held with Cabinet Members and Elected Members in **January and February 2026** and the issues raised in these workshops have fed into the review.

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 nationality) | Positive | <p>The Council's Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-28 will give 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</p> |

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|---|--|--|
| | | on every characteristic, including gender. |
| 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 | The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including sexual orientation. |
| 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> |

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|------------------------------------|----------|---|
| 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. Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work which enables them to live a good life</p> <p>Education – Transforming education for children in their early years</p> <p>Health – Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community.</p> <p>Justice and Standards of Living – Supporting People's Well-being</p> |
|------------------------------------|----------|---|

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 – Reviewing Gwynedd's Education Language Policy together with undertaking an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language.

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.

Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work which enables them to live a good life

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 – Using more of technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care.

We need to enable the people of Gwynedd to live a good life as long as possible within their local communities. To achieve this, they need to have the required information to take advantage of community opportunities that would promote their well-being, as well as flexible methods of organising the support they need.

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.