

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

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

The Council is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the impact that any changes 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 also has additional general duties to ensure fairness and to foster good relationships. Therefore, a timely assessment must be made before a 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. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use made of the Welsh language.

From 1 April 2021 onwards, 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?

Savings and Cuts 2024/2025

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

Savings and cuts to meet the financial gap the Council faces in the 2024/2025 budget.

### **1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?**

Dafydd Gibbard

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

There was an informal assessment by the departments in September 2023. This formal assessment was started on 17 January 2024.

## **2) Implementation**

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

Council Departments  
The People of Gwynedd  
The Cabinet  
Elected members in savings workshops

### **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?**

No specific engagement has taken place to date but a corporate engagement process has meant that Elected Members have had the opportunity to provide input based on their awareness of their areas and what their constituents are raising with them.

Departments will need to decide what level of engagement will be required to carry out their individual impact assessments and that will feed into the method of implementation.

### **2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?**

The plan has been developed and co-designed to include members' views.

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

We now know what our Welsh Government Revenue Support Grant (RSG) level will be for 2024/25 (an increase of 2%), and that it will be significantly below the level of inflation and well below what we will need to maintain our current level of services. The fact that Gwynedd's population had fallen by the time of the 2021 census means that the RSG level of increase we will receive here in Gwynedd represents the lowest increase throughout Wales.

We also face a situation where departments are overspending, mainly due to continued increases in demand for their services and that it is now impossible for some services such as homelessness, children care services, adults care services and school transport to be able to operate within their current budget. It results in overspending this year in the region of £8M. As there was no opportunity to plan ahead for this deficit, we are going to have to use reserves to cope with the situation.

The result of increased demand, the need to provide a higher budget for departments that are now unable to cope with their current budget, and the Government's low RSG, is that the Council faces a funding gap this year of £14.9M.

When submitting their proposals, the Departments included an assessment of the impact of each proposal on Gwynedd residents along with an initial consideration of equality considerations. Over a period of three days the Directors and the Chief Executive submitted the proposals to workshops of elected Members of the Council.

There are proposals relating to raising income through fees. Due to the cumulative effect and the fact that increased payments like this inevitably have a greater impact on people living with socio-economic disadvantage than others this is going to have a greater impact on some people.

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

It is possible that, due to a lack of adequate information, there is an impact on certain features and it is important to look at them individually to identify if a full assessment needs to be undertaken. Of course an impact assessment may have been done on a number of these already.

## 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? It is also necessary to consider the impact on Socio-Economic disadvantage and on the Welsh Language.**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>What type of impact?</b>	<b>In what way? What is the evidence?</b>
<b>Race (including nationality)</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Disability</b>	negative	The Adults, Health and Well-being Department has identified the possibility of an impact on those who use the services. That department will ensure that they mitigate any impact by assessing the needs of individuals. Other proposals have also been identified as having an impact on disabled people and impact assessments will be expected to be undertaken on the individual proposals to identify and mitigate the full impact. It is also important to recognise that disabled people will be cumulatively affected as they are the cohort that will be affected the most.
<b>Gender</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Age</b>	negative	The Adults, Health and Well-being Department has identified the possibility of an impact on those who use the services. That department will ensure that they mitigate any impact by assessing the needs of individuals. Other proposals have also been identified as having an impact on age and impact assessments will be expected to be undertaken on the individual proposals to identify and mitigate the full impact.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Religion or belief (or non-belief)</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>The Welsh language</b>	Neutral	The impact appears to be neutral in terms of the scheme, but it is necessary for departments to ensure that they carry out an impact assessment on the individual issues.
<b>Socio-Economic Disadvantage</b>	negative	There are proposals relating to raising income through fees. Due to the cumulative effect and the fact that increased payments like this inevitably have a greater

		<p>impact on people living with socio-economic disadvantage than others this is going to have a greater impact on some people.</p> <p>We will ensure that the relevant departments mitigate any negative effects when implementing.</p> <p>It is possible that some of the savings are going to influence the quality of some of the Council's activities but also this impact is marginal in the context of what is happening externally e.g. promoting the tourism field.</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. The Council must duly address the way any change impacts on these duties.**

<b>General Duties of the Equality Act</b>	<b>Does it have an impact?</b>	<b>In what way? What is the evidence?</b>
<b>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	No	The effect mentioned in 3.1 is not thought to be sufficient to lead to discrimination, harassment or persecution.
<b>Promote equal opportunities</b>	Possible	As an impact has been identified, careful action will have to be taken to ensure that the changes do not affect this duty.
<b>Building good relationships</b>	Possible	As an impact has been identified, careful action will have to be taken to ensure that the changes do not affect this duty.

**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 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?**

This Integrated Impact Assessment looks at the Savings Plan as a whole. It is likely that the same services will be available in Welsh and English following the savings so the Welsh language will not be treated less favorably than English. However, it is likely that a reduction in resources will generally affect the ability to increase existing opportunities to use and learn the

language in the community.

Each individual plan is expected to have a separate Assessment on the plan as a whole and/or on specific parts of it. These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to promote the Welsh language in their areas. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual plan to make that Assessment(s).

**3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice 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?**

n/a

**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).**

Many characteristic groups are also more prone to living in poverty. But they will also be affected by other forms of poverty, which relate to access to services, digital poverty etc.

There are proposals relating to raising income through fees. Due to the cumulative effect and the fact that increased payments like this inevitably have a greater impact on people living with socio-economic disadvantage than others this is going to have a greater impact on some people.

There are one or two proposals which have been identified for another reason. They involve reducing support for tourist companies. Many people who work in that sector are on low wages, but they may lose that income if the sector does not thrive.

**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?**

This will be addressed more thoroughly in the individual assessments

## 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?

These have varying impact and will be constantly monitored in their implementation, but it must be accepted that they are savings schemes in response to a National financial austerity situation.

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

#### Cause accumulative equality impacts

In the initial assessment this term was used to identify proposals relating to income generation by charging additional fees for the public (as opposed to other organisations). It is often assumed that charging this kind of fee will not have a prejudicial impact as they affect everyone who needs the service the same. However, this is not true, they certainly affect people who live in poverty more than other people. Statistics show that some groups of equality characteristics fall into this category. Families that include a disabled person are statistically more likely to be poorer than other families, as are single-parent families (which usually have a woman as the head of the family). 29% of children live in poverty. Some people from ethnic minority groups tend to be poorer, and some older people, and increasingly so. It must also be remembered that the impact of this is only getting worse because of the economic situation of the country as a whole.

But also one should look at the picture in general to see if any other cumulative effect is caused. It is clear from this initial assessment that some cohorts are more affected by these proposals – most specifically older people and people with disabilities. There will therefore be a noticeable cumulative effect on them.

### 4.3 What should be done?

Select one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	
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	X
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?**

The departments will work to ensure they mitigate any negative impacts.

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

n/a

**5) Monitoring**

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

The savings will be challenged at the performance monitoring meeting 4 times a year. In addition, a Savings Overview report will be presented to Cabinet 3 times a year.