

APPENDIX 8

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. The budget outlined here endeavours to continue to provide appropriate outcomes for all the county's citizens, but as there was insufficient increase in our income to meet the demand for services as well as inflation, we must implement the savings schemes already approved, together with the package of additional schemes which are in Appendix 3.
2. With savings, there is a possibility for us to have an impact which would disproportionately affect those with protected characteristics, but the departments responsible for the savings have proposed efficiency savings schemes rather than cuts. Also, the individual savings schemes have been the subject of appropriate impact assessments which support the financial decisions presented here. Where appropriate, in Appendix 3, there are relevant comments opposite the individual schemes.
3. Our aim was to ensure that our financial decisions conform with the requirements of the Equality legislation, namely:
 - Eliminate illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Promote equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Encourage good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In assessing, we had attempted to identify how to make the best of every opportunity to improve equality as well as trying to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts to the best of our ability.
4. In planning our budgets for the continuation of the Council's services, our accountants have given consideration to equality on every level, by utilising data and evidence in relation to demography and trends by planning at a strategic level. In the same way (but more specific) when coming to decisions on individual savings schemes, the Council's heads of department have analysed the impact of schemes on services, and monitored the impact appropriately.
5. The recommended budget does more than meet inflation costs. It also attempts to ensure that unavoidable financial pressures being placed on services (due to greater demands from increasing numbers of clients, pupils, etc) are also addressed by making conscientious and reasonable budgetary decisions (see the additional expenditure requirements, including 'demography', in part 3 of the report).
6. Each service has the right to submit a bid for resources if it considers that additional funding is required to ensure that services continue. The sums seen under the "service pressures" heading is recognition that the Council provides sufficient funding to ensure that our financial arrangements do not have a detrimental impact on the level of services provided. Full details are given in Appendix 2 and it can be seen that a substantial part (over £4m) of the total sum of permanent revenue bids (£4.34m) is going to social care (including Homelessness, Adults' Care and Childrens' Care), and the majority of the remainder (£334k) will go towards school transport for pupils with special needs.

Assistance was received from Delyth Gadlys Williams, the Council's Policy and Equality Officer when completing this form.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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?

2020/21 Savings

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

Savings to meet the funding gap that the Council faces in the 2020/21 Budget. Each Department had a target, originally of 0.78% of their gross budgets, which was a total of £2 million. This was reduced to £1.062 million following an assessment of the proposals, and not implementing those which could have an impact on residents.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Dafydd L Edwards, Head of Finance

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

An informal assessment took place before the Cabinet on 17/12/19. This formal assessment began on 31 January 2020.

2) Implementation

2.1 Who are the partners that you will have to work with to carry out this assessment?

The Council's Departments
The people of Gwynedd
Members of the Scrutiny Committees and Audit & Governance Committee
The Cabinet
Elected Members in Budget Workshops

2.2. What steps have you taken to engage with people with protected characters?

During 2018 a consultation took place called “Which Services are Important to You?” to identify what the people of Gwynedd’s priorities were in order to make budgetary decisions for 2019-22. This consultation will be used for the three years.

For the purpose of the new savings for 2020/21 in this Budget, discussions were held in meetings of the Scrutiny Committees and the Audit & Governance Committee, in order to scrutinise all the Departments’ proposals (worth £2m).

4 Budget Seminars were held – 1 in Dolgellau, 1 in Pwllheli and 2 in Caernarfon to look at the budget, including the savings (worth £1.062m to be presented for decision).

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

The consultation “Which Services are Important to You?” showed that the majority of the people of Gwynedd felt that Social Services and Education were the most important services to protect.

As a result of the scrutiny, it was decided to restrict the savings to £1.062m, being the proposals that should not have an impact on residents (see the Cabinet report of 17 December 2019 which includes a table from the Chief Executive which ranks the saving in terms of impact).

2.4 What other information informed the way you operate?

The 2020/21 Budget and savings plans are presented in the context of the Welsh Government's Grant Settlement to local authorities in Wales, which provides adequate additional resources to address inflation, but not enough to address the additional demand, mainly increased demands for social care, children and adult services.

Therefore, in order to give priority to the vulnerable people in Gwynedd who receive care services, savings must be prioritised and achieved in areas with less impact.

Council Departments' information – the Departments have a core knowledge of their services. They have looked carefully at their work and have identified further savings that will not have an impact, or have a small impact, on the residents of Gwynedd. They have been able to do this because of things like changes in technology, or better practices.

2.5 Are there any gaps in evidence that need to be gathered?

No

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must give due regard to the impact any changes will have on people with equality characteristics. What impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes have on these characteristics? You are welcome to add further characteristics if you wish.

Characteristics	What type of impact?	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
The Welsh language	None	No impact has been identified with regard to the Welsh language, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
Disability	Negative	The Adults' Department has identified the possibility of an impact, but not a significant impact, on those who use their services. This Department will need to ensure that they mitigate any impacts.
Gender	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
Age	Negative	The Adults' Department has identified the possibility of an impact, but not a significant impact, on those who use their services. An impact, but not a significant impact, has also been identified with some of the Education Departments' proposals. The Departments will need to ensure that they mitigate any impacts.
Sexual orientation	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
Religion or belief (or lack of belief)	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
Gender reassignment	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.

Pregnancy and maternity	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.
Marriage and civil partnership	None	No impact has been identified on this characteristic, but it is necessary for the Departments to ensure they monitor and identify and mitigate any impacts which are highlighted during implementation.

3.2 It is the Council's duty, under the Equality Act 2010, to contribute positively to a fairer community by promoting equality and good relationships in their activities in the areas of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, transgender, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must give due regard to the way any change affects these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does the policy have an impact?	In what way? What is the evidence?
Remove illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	The impact mentioned in 3.1 is not thought to be sufficient to lead to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
Promoting equal opportunities	Possibly	As an impact has been identified, careful action will have to be taken to ensure that the changes do not affect this duty.
Encouraging good relationships	Possibly	As an impact has been identified, careful action will have to be taken to ensure that the changes do not affect this duty.

4) Analysing the results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the equality characteristics or the General Duties and what is the reason for this?

No significant, positive impacts have been identified as a result of implementing savings, but there will be a generally positive impact on the continuation of the services considered a priority for protection and funded to the level of additional demand.

4.2 Is the Plan therefore likely to have a substantial, negative impact on any of the equality characteristics or General Duties and what is the reason for this?

An impact has been identified, but it is not thought to be substantial, as these are efficiency savings rather than cuts.

4.3 What should be done?

Select one of the following:

Continue with the plan as it is robust	
Adapt the plan to remove any barriers	
Suspend and abolish the plan as the detrimental impacts are too large	
Continue with the plan as any detrimental impact can be justified	X

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

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

4.5 If you do not take further action to remove or reduce negative impacts, explain why here.

See above.

5) Monitoring

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

The savings will be challenged in the Performance Challenge Meetings 3 times per year and will be presented to Cabinet as part of the individual Cabinet Members' performance reports. Also, the Savings Overview report will be presented to the Cabinet and to the Audit & Governance Committee three times per year.