

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 any change 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 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?

Council Plan 2018 - 23, the 2022/23 Review

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

The purpose of the Council's Plan is to identify priorities and key fields to be implemented between 2018 and 2023. The original version of the Plan was approved by the Council at its meeting on 8 March 2018. The Plan in its first year stated our vision for 5 years, and then every annual review offers an update that summarises where we have arrived on the journey, and what our priorities will be for the year to come.

The Plan is annually reviewed and re-published with any necessary adaptations. These include

a number of priorities to improve the current plan, the priority matters that need attention in the short term, and any other matters to stabilise and rebuild following the COVID-19 period that need to be included in the priorities.

This version of the Plan, the 2022/23 Review, will replace the current version.

This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Every individual plan is expected to be Assessed separately on the project in its entirety and/or specific sections of it. It is the responsibility of the person who is responsible for the individual plan to carry out the Assessment(s).

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Dewi Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager

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

27 June 2017, version 1 relating to the engagement
13 December 2017, version 2, full assessment of the Plan.
4 February 2019 - version 3, full assessment of 2019-20 review
31 January 2020 - version 4, full assessment of 2020-21 review
16 February 2021, version 5, full assessment of 2021-22 review

This is version 6 - 15 February 2022, full assessment of 2022-23 review

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, partners on Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board.

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?

A 6-week consultation during winter 2017/18 to present 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/ymgyngori. Paper copies were also available in local libraries and Siopau Gwynedd.

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

We contacted as many as possible interested groups and groups representing or working with people and/children with equality characteristics to notify them of the engagement and to ask them to notify their users of the questionnaire.

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

197 questionnaires were received.

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

1) Completed the questionnaire as:

- Individual - 159
- Organisation or business - 5
- No answer - 33

2) Gender:

- Male - 84
- Female - 65
- Prefer not to say - 9
- No response - 39

3) Age group:

- 18-29 - 8
- 30-39 - 23
- 40-49 - 29
- 50-59 - 34
- 60-69 - 31
- 70 or older - 25
- Prefer not to say - 9

- No answer - 38

4) National identity:

- Welsh - 77
- English - 22
- British - 46
- Other - 9
- I prefer not to say - 8
- No response - 35

5) Ethnic Origin:

- White - 141
- Mixed / several ethnic groups - 4
- Black / African / Caribbean - 1
- I prefer not to say - 11
- Other - 3
- No response - 37

6) Do you consider yourself as a disabled person?

- Yes - 15
- No - 129
- I prefer not to say - 15
- No answer - 38

7) Religion:

- Christian (every denomination) - 72
- Hindu - 2
- No religion - 52
- Atheist - 5
- Jehovah's Witness - 1
- Humanist - 1
- Vasinava – 1
- Wicca - 1
- Other - 7
- I prefer not to say - 17
- No answer - 38

8) Sexual Orientation:

- Heterosexual / Straight - 127
- Gay man - 1
- Bisexual - 1
- Other - 8
- I prefer not to say - 20
- No answer - 40

9) Gender at birth:

- Male - 79
- Female - 61

- Intersexual - 1
- I prefer not to say - 15
- No response - 41

10) The way you think about yourself:

- Male - 77
- Female - 59
- Other - 8
- I prefer not to say - 13
- No answer - 40

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

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

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

As part of the process of drawing up the Council's Plan for 2018-23, a series of 8 area meetings were held during July 2017 in order to give local members an opportunity to highlight any issues requiring attention within those areas. In addition, members of the Scrutiny Committees identified matters that they believed should be included within the Council Plan in the future.

Four further workshop sessions were held with members in September 2017 in Caernarfon, Penrhyndeudraeth, Dolgellau and Pwllheli. The purpose of these workshops was to give them an opportunity to identify the county priorities to be included within the Council's Plan and make further observations on the priorities identified per area.

Any new project will be expected to have firm evidence of the need for it. In planning any new project the impact on the people of Gwynedd should be measured and draw up a specific Equality Impact Assessment as required (see 1.2).

Although the 2021/22 Plan was a follow-up, there were many amendments due to the Covid pandemic and therefore it was decided to conduct further workshops with Gwynedd Councillors.

In order to ensure that we still meet the needs of Gwynedd residents, it was decided to engage on the 2022-23 version of the Plan with Councillors again in December 2021.

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

This will be identified in the assessments of individual plans

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? There is also a need to consider the impact on the socio-economic disadvantage and on the Welsh language.

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>There will be a need to consider some of the comments below on the Welsh Language under this feature, and it will be more important in some projects in fields such as tourism, education etc than others.</p> <p>Social changes and the travel and mobility practices of people seen as a result of Covid during 2020 have highlighted matters in the fields of tourism and housing (increase in holiday and second homes) and how these changes affect the native community.</p> <p>It will also be important for the plans to consider the impact of Covid on communities and ethnic minorities as some sections are more likely to suffer from its impact. It will also be necessary to consider the factors highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement.</p>
Disability	Positive	<p>Care is a priority, therefore it is expected to have a positive impact. Each individual plan is expected to look at the impact on disability when carrying out a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The responses to the engagement shows great support for the care workforce with many wanting them to have a pay increase, better working conditions, more training and the</p>

	<p>opportunity to move on in their career. There was concern about turnover in the workforce. There is also demand for improving standards within care homes and to attract more young people into the field.</p> <p>Another strong message is the need to carry out preventative work to ensure that people do not need health care and to learn from good practice in other areas. There was strong support for facilities such as libraries and leisure centres to be used as resources for this and that cuts in these fields would be a "false economy". The need for transport was also emphasised.</p> <p>Also, the need for the Council to collaborate more, internally and with external organisations such as health and the third sector, is a strong message from those who have responded to the consultation. Support should also be given to communities and provide facilities such as health care and additional care homes in the countryside as well as the big towns.</p> <p>The misuse of parking spaces available to disabled people was identified. Two people were in favour of disabled people paying for parking, one of them is a disabled person. One disabled person said that cars parked on the pavement was a problem.</p> <p>The need for a variety of housing has been identified including accessible ones.</p> <p>Two people were concerned that they did not reach the criteria for care despite being disabled.</p> <p>It was noted that disabled people and people with health conditions are in greater need of public toilets.</p> <p>A number from Meirionnydd believed that the quality of care was not consistent across the county and one person asked for a centre for people with Alzheimer's in the region and another noted concern about failing to have care through the medium of Welsh there. One disabled person noted that it was not possible to get cleaners in Meirionnydd. They received a list from the Council but there was no one on it from their area. He believed that this was because of the need to speak Welsh. This person was concerned because of the impact on health needs.</p> <p>The Covid period has been very challenging for both disabled people and social services. There are plans in priority 6 in response to this.</p>
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		<p>In addition, the plans will need to consider the impact the Covid pandemic has on people with specific conditions, especially those who have had to isolate for long periods. Some who suffer from long Covid will come into this category. More generally the pandemic will have had an impact on the mental health of people in various ways.</p>
Gender	Positive	<p>There is one specific individual plan in this field 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 plans.</p> <p>More generally, it will be necessary to identify the impact that Covid has had on the mental health of carers - either the carers of the disabled or as parents. Statistics indicate that women are more likely to undertake caring roles. It is also necessary to remember one-parent families, and the vast majority of these have women as head of the family.</p> <p>It is also particularly important to consider the impact on people, women or men, who have suffered domestic abuse during the pandemic.</p>
Age	Positive	<p>Age is prioritised in a number of fields therefore it is expected to have a positive impact on the field of children, young people and older people.</p> <p>Each individual plan is expected to look at the impact on different ages when carrying out a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The consultation demonstrated support for work in the field of Children, Young People and Families, especially early support and intervention, strengthening education and providing young people with training to enable them to get jobs. There was concern that the emphasis on the Welsh language affected recruitment and the quality of education within the schools. The importance of Additional Learning Needs provision was noted. Several expressed that they did not wish to see cuts in the field of children's care. One person said that it was important to support young people after they left care.</p> <p>There is concern that we are losing talented young people. Seasonal tourist jobs do not keep young people in the area. The lack of hope and aspiration is a problem for young people in Meirionnydd according to one person. Young people need work to pay for housing.</p>

	<p>The Council recognises that there will be a change in demography with an ageing population. The response to the engagement shows that people are concerned about future provision e.g. care homes, because of these changes. There is demand for people to be able to live independently in their communities and to support those communities to reduce the need for care. One respondent wants apprenticeships for older people not just young people and another notes the fact that older people need to park in spaces nearer to the town centre.</p> <p>There is also demand for nurturing a good relationship between the generations, and the Hen Blant Bach television programme was mentioned. One person proposed that lonely older people should be paired with homeless young people.</p> <p>It was identified that cars parking on the pavement is a problem for older people and families with young children in prams.</p> <p>A cohort of people who do not necessarily receive much attention when preparing Equality Impact Assessments are working age people, however, the Equality Act 2010 protects the rights of people of all ages. The comments about jobs etc. apply to this age. There was strong support to creating and retaining jobs in Gwynedd and improving the infrastructure to achieve this. There were also messages about improving the residents' skills, attracting big companies, not being too reliant on tourism and supporting developments outside the county. The lack of public transport at the right time could also create problems for people who want to work.</p> <p>The need for a greater variety of housing has been identified with the needs of young people and older people being identified. Nevertheless, we should not forget the needs of people of other ages, with the demand for affordable housing and housing for local people. There were also comments about housing being close to work opportunities and public transport links, having less stringent planning regulations in the countryside, looking at empty housing and the need for social housing. One person felt that the problem was that the homes were not available in the right places for young families (i.e. in towns close to schools and shops).</p> <p>A number of people identified the importance of libraries and leisure centres for children, young people and older</p>
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		<p>people for socialising, health and somewhere to go, away from the streets. The need for provision for young people was also noted e.g. youth clubs, Young Farmers' Club.</p> <p>As older people are much more likely to have difficulties with Covid, it is necessary as these plans move forward, to consider the impact Covid has had on older people. This is particularly true of those who have had to self-isolate for long periods.</p> <p>The pandemic has also had a very poor impact on the lives and welfare of children and young people and it is important to also consider this in moving forward.</p> <p>Indeed, Covid has impacted everyone's welfare and changes have been made to some plans as a response to this. This will need to be considered in every plan.</p>
Sexual orientation	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>The impact on the mental health of people who have been unable to meet their partners, if they do not live with them, should also be considered.</p> <p>It is also particularly important to consider the impact on people, women or men, who have suffered domestic abuse during the pandemic.</p>
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>One person said that there was no room for religion within education.</p>
Gender reassignment	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p> <p>It's been a very difficult time for pregnant mothers and young families as a result of the pandemic. There are plans to assist families within improvement priority 6.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	None identified	<p>There are no individual plans that involve this feature. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider.</p>

<p>The Welsh language</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>This is a priority field therefore it is expected to have a positive impact on the Welsh language. Each individual plan is expected to look at the impact on the Welsh language when carrying out a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>In relation to prioritising the Welsh language specifically in the consultation, 18 of the comments supported the need to prioritise the Welsh language and 14 said that no money should be spent on the language.</p> <p>A number of comments were received about the use of the Welsh language in the community or outside the classroom and organisations such as the Young Farmers' Clubs were mentioned as a result of the intention to reorganise the Youth Service.</p> <p>In addition, the following needs were identified - for the Council to help the private sector to offer Welsh language provision, more bilingual signs and to ensure jobs or suitable housing to keep young people in the area. One believed that the Welsh language is a skill to attract jobs to the area.</p> <p>There was concern that prioritising the Welsh language alienated non-Welsh speakers and tourists. There was concern also about costs, with a number believing that there was no need for correspondence to be bilingual, rather it should be in the recipients' chosen language and there is no need for simultaneous translation if everyone is able to speak English. It was noted that the Council's staffing policy could alienate non-Welsh people and the Council could lose out on more able/experienced staff. It was believed that this was very likely in fields such as care. It was suggested that there should be an opportunity to learn Welsh 'on the job' and also the Council should encourage, and not force staff to speak the language.</p> <p>One person called for the correspondence from schools to be bilingual rather than in Welsh only.</p> <p>According to the respondents, the most important things about Welsh language lessons were their cost, their convenience (transport etc.) and their suitability.</p> <p>A number of comments were received about the Welsh language when discussing matters related to children, young people and families also. Most of those comments were against preferential treatment of the Welsh language. There is concern that it would affect standards of</p>
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		<p>education and recruiting staff and also the cost. It was said that teachers should be allowed to develop language skills whilst in post. On the other hand, comments were received about the need to develop materials e.g. apps, and provide free Welsh language lessons.</p> <p>Although not talking specifically about the Welsh language, there are a number of comments relating to the need for affordable housing and housing for local people.</p> <p>The need to use clear Welsh when communicating with the public was noted, especially education reports. The need to improve the standard of the language in correspondence etc. was also noted and the need to check it before sending. The respondent accepted that errors were occurring because Welsh was the natural language.</p> <p>The Covid period has led to several changes that have the potential to have a negative impact on the Welsh language, including a reduction in the number of events and activities that encourage the use of Welsh in the community, the closure of schools has led to less use of Welsh amongst children and young people, stress on local businesses who support employment opportunities, reduction in the new employment opportunities, increase in tourism leading to concerns about an increase in second homes and the protection of native names.</p> <p>A number of the Plan's projects get to grips with these matters.</p>
<p>Socio-Economic Disadvantage</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The Council is aware that a number of Gwynedd residents live under unequal living conditions due to socio-economic disadvantage. Therefore, a number of projects in the Council Plan already relate to reducing socio-economic disadvantage. Examples of projects are noted below:</p> <p>Education - The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People.</p> <p>There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment; and some of them need additional help to close that gap as well as support with their welfare. We are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown have highlighted the vulnerability of the early years, and beyond school, we are also realising that the 16-24 age group has been disproportionately affected by the crisis, more so than any other age group. In 2022/23, we will have introduced a strategy for the early years field, which will secure the best start for families with children aged 0-5 years in Gwynedd.</p>

We will also have updated our engagement framework for our post-16 learners and drawn-up a strategy to provide well-being, mental health and homelessness support for them. We will have agreed on the most effective support model in order to support the well-being of school-age pupils.

Health - A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the future.

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted a number of other factors that can affect our ability to continue to provide suitable care services for the people of Gwynedd. We have committed to improve the quality of our care provision across the county. During 2022/23, we will:

- open a bespoke dementia unit that has been completed at Llan Ffestiniog, but has not been able to open due to the Covid-19 crisis.
- open a bespoke dementia unit in our care home in Barmouth.
- make use of the adaptations made to our care home in Dolgellau in order to offer bespoke care for individuals with profound physical needs.
- open the Extra Care Housing provision in Pwllheli, and continue with the work of identifying opportunities for similar developments in other parts of the county, with priority given to Dolgellau and to the broader Meirionnydd area
- strengthen our quality assurance services to ensure sufficient support for care providers to help them to maintain quality services for the residents of Gwynedd.

Employment - Creating High Value Jobs (Salary of £31,300 or more).

Salaries in Gwynedd are among the lowest anywhere in Britain. The weekly pay of residents in the county were almost the lowest in Wales in 2020 (£500 on average) and low pay was at its worst in our rural communities (£418 - the lowest in Britain). Low salaries will inevitably lead to higher levels of poverty and rural depopulation, which in turn affects our communities, the future of our young people, and the Welsh language as a healthy community language.

The Creating High Value Jobs project has already taken steps to improve the situation, ensuring European funding to realise a plan to develop space for businesses to locate at Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr, and a plan to increase the number of school pupils who study the subjects desired by businesses within well-paid sectors, have influenced the decision to continue with the decommissioning work on the Trawsfynydd Power Station

		<p>site and work with Welsh Government to establish a Start-up company to regenerate the site.</p> <p>In future, we will continue with these schemes, and we will also lead on other schemes such as supporting the development of the creative and digital industries sector, supporting the development of the low carbon energy sector and the health and medical sector. We will also be working with Gwynedd businesses to understand the need for skills for higher value jobs in the future and promote these opportunities locally.</p> <p>Justice and Standards of Living - Supporting People's Well-being</p> <p>Some residents are finding it difficult to cope with life challenges as a result of the Covid-19 crisis; and the vulnerable situation of some other residents has worsened during the crisis. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to be healthy. We have a broad and numerous network throughout the county's communities which helps and supports residents to cope and respond to their various needs. That network needs support to sustain that voluntary effort.</p> <p>The long-term nature of this plan when seeking to tackle poverty, complex social challenges, and working across numerous services, means that we are continuing on a journey to achieve the plan's objectives.</p> <p>Participation - Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig</p> <p>The nature of our rural economy means that 80% of Gwynedd businesses do not employ more than one person and there are too many jobs within sectors which don't pay well. Ensuring digital connectivity for our rural communities, and that the workforce and rural businesses have the skills to take advantage of them are matters that have already received attention. We have held a pilot scheme to provide public WiFi in eight rural towns, and to increase access to computer equipment.</p> <p>In the future, we will continue to extend the digital provision in communities and will work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the private sector to establish a rural innovation hub in Glynllifon, giving particular attention to the food and drink sector, and we will work to develop the foundation economy and support our rural businesses to adapt.</p>
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* To be deleted as required

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 priorities and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider. Because of Covid people have been unable to get their usual services and it is possible that this has had an impact on some groups more than others. It is important to ensure that there is no discrimination against them when moving on.
Promote equal opportunities	Yes	The priorities and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider. As one respondent noted, it is important to remember the equality features of individuals when providing services, especially in the care field. This is especially true of as we move forward as a result of Covid.
Foster good relationships	Yes	The priorities and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify any matters to consider. It has to be recognised that there is work to be done in this field as a result of Covid.

* To be deleted as required

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, 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?

Project - Promoting the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services
Gwynedd Council has been prominent in terms of ensuring that services for residents are available through the medium of Welsh as we operate through the medium of Welsh internally.

Project - The Welsh Language and Public Services

By working with our partners who are a part of the Welsh Language Sub-group, Public Services Board, we have commissioned a study of traditional receptions, that will investigate this.

Project - Native Welsh Place Names

We are concerned that native Welsh place names are disappearing from the landscape of Gwynedd as a result of a lack of use of Welsh names and an increase in renaming places in English.

Project - Promoting Use of the Welsh Language by Children and Young People

The skills and confidence of learners (more specifically in non-Welsh speaking homes) in Welsh have deteriorated as a result of lockdown and Covid-19. In 2021/22, we have succeeded to establish a baseline of the current situation of the Welsh language as a result of the impact of lockdown and Covid-19 and we have started to support schools to draw-up a Strategy and Action Plan to respond to the situation.

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 fields to be implemented between 2018 and 2023. This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Every individual plan is expected to be Assessed separately on the project in its entirety and/or specific sections of it. It is the responsibility of the person who is responsible for the individual plan to carry out the Assessment(s). These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to promote the Welsh language in their fields.

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).

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

Education - The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People.

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment; and some of them need additional help to close that gap as well as support with their welfare. We are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown have highlighted the vulnerability of the early years, and beyond school, we are also realising that the 16-24 age group has been disproportionately affected by the crisis, more so than any other age group. In 22/23, we will have introduced a strategy for the early years field, which

will secure the best start for families with children aged 0-5 years in Gwynedd. We will also have updated our engagement framework for our post-16 learners and drawn-up a strategy to provide well-being, mental health and homelessness support for them. We will have agreed on the most effective support model in order to support the well-being of school-age pupils.

Health - A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the future.

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted a number of other factors that can affect our ability to continue to provide suitable care services for the people of Gwynedd. We have committed to improve the quality of our care provision across the county. During 2022/23, we will:

- open a bespoke dementia unit that has been completed at Llan Ffestiniog, but has not been able to open due to the Covid-19 crisis.
- open a bespoke dementia unit in our care home in Barmouth.
- make use of the adaptations made to our care home in Dolgellau in order to offer bespoke care for individuals with profound physical needs.
- open the Extra Care Housing provision in Pwllheli, and continue with the work of identifying opportunities for similar developments in other parts of the county, with priority given to Dolgellau and to the broader Meirionnydd area.
- strengthen our quality assurance services to ensure sufficient support for care providers to help them to maintain quality services for the residents of Gwynedd.

Employment - Creating High Value Jobs (Salary of £31,300 or more).

Salaries in Gwynedd are among the lowest anywhere in Britain. The weekly pay of residents in the county were almost the lowest in Wales in 2020 (£500 on average) and low pay was at its worst in our rural communities (£418 - the lowest in Britain). Low salaries will inevitably lead to higher levels of poverty and rural depopulation, which in turn affects our communities, the future of our young people, and the Welsh language as a healthy community language.

The Creating High Value Jobs project has already taken steps to improve the situation, ensuring European funding to realise a plan to develop space for businesses to locate at Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr, implement a plan to increase the number of school pupils who study the subjects desired by businesses within well-paid sectors and have influenced the decision to continue with the decommissioning work on the Trawsfynydd Power Station site and work with Welsh Government to establish a Start-up company to regenerate the site.

In future, we will continue with these schemes, and we will also lead on other schemes such as supporting the development of the creative and digital industries sector, supporting the development of the low carbon energy sector and the health and medical sector. We will also be working with Gwynedd businesses to understand the need for skills for higher value jobs in the future and promote these opportunities locally.

Justice and Standards of Living - Supporting People's Well-being

Some residents are finding it difficult to cope with life challenges as a result of the Covid-19 crisis; and the vulnerable situation of some other residents has worsened during the crisis.

These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to be healthy. We have a broad and numerous network throughout the county's communities which helps and supports residents to cope and respond to their various needs. That network needs support to sustain that voluntary effort.

The long-term nature of this plan when seeking to tackle poverty, complex social challenges,

and working across numerous services, means that we are continuing on a journey to achieve the plan's objectives.

Participation - Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig

The nature of our rural economy means that 80% of Gwynedd businesses do not employ more than one person and there are too many jobs within sectors which don't pay well. Ensuring digital connectivity for our rural communities, and that the workforce and rural businesses have the skills to take advantage of them are matters that have already received attention. We have held a pilot scheme to provide public WiFi in eight rural towns, and to increase access to computer equipment.

In the future, we will continue to extend the digital provision in communities and will work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the private sector to establish a rural innovation hub in Glynllifon, giving particular attention to the food and drink sector, and we will work to develop the foundation economy and support our rural businesses to adapt.

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

Every individual plan is expected to be Assessed separately on the project in its entirety and/or specific sections of it and this will include an assessment of the socio-economic disadvantage. It is the responsibility of the person who is responsible for the individual plan to carry out the 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 priorities should have a significant, positive impact on at least some of the equality characteristics. Every individual equality impact assessment looks at the impact in greater detail. This is especially true if Covid considerations are going to be considered fully 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 substantial, negative impacts have been identified with the Plan as a whole. Every individual equality impact assessment looks at the impact in greater detail. Having said this the pandemic has had a very negative impact on all sections of society and there is considerable work to be done in every field in order to deal with these challenges.

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 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.

This is not relevant to the Plan in its entirety.

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 plans within the Council's Plan. The Council's performance challenge processes, where the Cabinet Member and members of scrutiny committees challenge the growth and development of the work being achieved on the Plan, is continuous work throughout the year. Reports on these performance challenge meetings are published as part of the Cabinet meeting papers.

If it is necessary to change the contents or direction of any individual project then the Equality Impact Assessment will be revisited for that project. Due to Covid it will be important to do this with every plan.

This document will also be submitted to the Cabinet and the Council for scrutiny and will be reviewed annually.

This is the final year in this Plan's period, therefore, it has not changed much from last year. When creating a new Plan, we will be very aware of our duties towards equality, socio-economic disadvantage and the Welsh language and assessing the impact of the Plan as we develop it.