

Impact Assessment - First Stage

It is essential that all initiatives undergo a first stage impact assessment to identify relevance to equalities and the Welsh language as well as an evaluation of how the proposal has taken into account the sustainable development principle (the five ways of working); an incorrect assessment could ultimately be open to legal challenge.

The first stage is to carry out a short assessment to help determine the need to undertake a more in-depth analysis (the second stage).

Relevance will depend not only on the number of people/service users affected, but also the significance of the effect on them.

When completing the first step you must have regard to the following:

- Does the initiative relate to an area where important equality issues have been, or are likely to be, raised? (For example, funding for services to assist people who are victims of rape/sexual violence or individuals with particular care need; disabled people's access to public transport; the gender pay gap; racist or homophobic bullying in schools)
- Is there a significant potential for reducing inequalities, or improving outcomes? (For example, increasing recruitment opportunities for disabled people).
- Does the initiative relate to instances where opportunities to use the Welsh language are likely to be affected or where the language is likely to be treated less favourably? (For example, increase the number of Welsh speakers moving from/to a certain area; closing specific Welsh language services or put those services at risk services;
- Does the initiative relate to the improvement of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being? To what extent does the initiative prevent things getting worse? (For example, funding for services to assist in cultural well-being; changes in policies that promote independence and/or assist carers)

1. Provide a description and summary of the initiative. Clarity as to the purpose of the initiative being developed or reviewed; the context within which it will operate; who it is intended to benefit, and the results aimed for is essential.

Identify which service area and directorate has responsibility for the initiative.

Strategic Decision - if yes a Full IIA will be required.

Strategic Decision - is one which effects how we fulfil our intended statutory purpose over a significant period of time. They do not include day to day decisions, such as opening times of civic offices, Christmas car parking arrangements, etc. but will include the following (although these are not exhaustive):

- Strategies developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Service Boards which impact on our functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)

- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Changes to and development of public services
- Strategic financial planning
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Strategic policy development.

2. Identify who will be affected by the initiative.

If you answer **Yes** to service users, staff or wider community continue with the first stage of the assessment

If you answer **No** to service users, staff or wider community or **Yes** to 'Internal administrative process only', go to **Question 5 – sustainable development principle**.

3. Evidence - it is essential to have robust and reliable evidence to inform the development and assessment of initiatives. In this section all relevant evidence used in the assessment must be detailed and sources clearly identified; if necessary a summary of the data used can be included. More information on data/evidence can be found in the full IIA Guidance

4. Using relevant and appropriate information and data that is available to you think about what impact there could be on people who share protected characteristics; whether they are service users, staff or the wider community.

Some things to consider:

- transport issues
- accessibility
- customer service
- cultural sensitivity
- financial implications
- loss of jobs

Definitions of impacts (either positive or negative):

- High – The initiative has a high level of relevance to one or more protected characteristic and/or one or more aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Moderate – The initiative has a moderate level of relevance to one or more protected characteristic and/or one or more aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Low – The initiative has a low level of relevance/is not relevant to any protected characteristic and/or any aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Don't know - the level of relevance of the initiative is unknown

You **must** provide reasons, and indicate what evidence you used, in coming to your decision.

5. Using relevant and appropriate information and data that is available, think about what impact there could be on opportunities to use the Welsh language and in treating the language no less favourably than English. Further information can be found in Section 6 Welsh of the Full IIA Guidance.

Definitions of impacts are the same as in **Question 3**.

The classification 'Don't Know' should be categorised as 'High Impact' in both questions 3 & 4.

6. The outcomes of any audit of council owned land undertaken by the Countryside and Wildlife Team can be used to inform your assessment. In addition consider the potential impact of your initiative on maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

Some examples of how proposals, decisions and functions can impact on biodiversity include:

- Drainage works to a culvert - could result in flooding further downstream or altering the hydrological regime upstream; potential risk of flooding, or wet/bog habitats that trap carbon being drained.
- High level policy, plan or budget decisions may encourage or focus investment in areas that will have significant knock on issues in relation to flooding, climate change sea level rise or biodiversity loss. Alternatively, budget decisions may reduce capacity of services or infrastructure to function and to deliver community environmental services e.g. effects on well-being from a reduction in access to greenspace, parks or environmental community services.
- Decisions can also have positive impacts on the wider environment. For example, reduction in grass cutting that encourages more wildflower growth can positively support pollinator insects that contribute to food production.

7. Consider how the initiative has embraced the sustainable development principle in accordance with the Section 7c of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Give details of the initiative in relation to the 5 ways of working:

- **Long term** - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people
- **Integration** - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives
- **Involvement** - how people have been involved in developing the initiative
- **Collaboration** - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions;
- **Prevention** - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse

8. The most appropriate statement must be selected (and the relevant box ticked) based on the first stage of the assessment and an explanation of how you have arrived at this decision must be given.

In addition a summary of the how the initiative has embraced the sustainable development principle must also be included.

Where the first stage of the assessment indicates that a more in-depth analysis is required the second stage of the assessment will need to be completed and this will need to be started immediately.

A first stage assessment must be included as a background paper for all Cabinet/Cabinet Board/ Scrutiny Committee Reports.

Where the first stage assessment is completed by an accountable manager it must be signed off by a Head of Service/Director.

NB: these notes to be removed prior to inclusion of First Stage Impact Assessment with Cabinet/Cabinet Board papers.

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

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| Initiative description and summary: Update of the Council's Arboricultural Management Plan. |
| Service Area: Neighbourhood Services |
| Directorate: Environment & Regeneration |
| Strategic Decision: Yes |

2. Does the initiative affect:

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Service users | x | |
| Staff | x | |
| Wider community | x | |
| Internal administrative process only | | x |

3. Evidence used in the Assessment

Relevant legislation and guidance have been reviewed in order to ensure compliance through implementation of the plan. Similar management plans from neighbouring local authorities were studied to understand positive and negative impacts of implementing certain strategic decisions.

4. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

| | Yes | No | None/ Negligible | Don't Know | Impact H/M/L/D | Reasons for your decision and details of the impact |
|----------------------------|-----|----|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|---|
| Age | | X | | | | |
| Disability | | X | | | | |
| Gender Reassignment | | X | | | | |
| Marriage/Civil Partnership | | X | | | | |
| Pregnancy/Maternity | | X | | | | |
| Race | | X | | | | |
| Religion/Belief | | X | | | | |
| Sex | | X | | | | |
| Sexual orientation | | X | | | | |

5. Does the initiative impact on:

| | Yes | No | None/ Negligible | Don't know | Impact H/M/L | Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact? |
|---|-----|----|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|---|
| People's opportunities to use the Welsh language | | x | | | | |
| Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English | | | x | | | Policy will be made available in both Welsh & English |

6. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

| | Yes | No | None/ Negligible | Don't know | Impact H/M/L | Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact? |
|--|-----|----|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|---|
| To maintain and enhance biodiversity | x | | | | L | The arboricultural management plan outlines how ecological assessment will be built into tree management processes. Any tree work will be subject to appropriate ecological surveys (including for nesting birds and bat roosts) and mitigation to ensure maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity. If potential for nesting birds, bat roosts or other features of ecological interest are identified, the Countryside and Wildlife Team will be consulted to assist with planning of any required remedial works and enhancements. |
| To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc. | x | | | | L | The arboricultural management plan will lead to the removal of diseased, dead or dying trees with the aim to improve the overall health of the tree stock. Where the death of a tree and its subsequent removal will have a negative impact on air quality or flood alleviation, this will be identified as part of the tree inspection process and necessary mitigation and enhancement will be arranged. |

7. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

| | Yes | No | Details |
|---|-----|----|---|
| Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people | X | | By strategically managing our tree stock within the borough of Neath Port Talbot, we will be helping to work towards mitigating both the Nature and Climate change emergencies. |

| | Yes | No | Details |
|--|-----|----|---|
| Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives | x | | The plan will allow the service to be managed effectively, as opposed to the current reactive approach. |
| Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative | x | | An integral part of tree management is collaboration which will take place with numerous stakeholders such as, Utility Companies, Private Land Owners, contractors and other council departments. Feedback from other departments and neighbourhood officers have been considered throughout the process in order to ensure that implementation of the plan will benefit the wider authority. |
| Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions | x | | As Above |
| Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse | x | | The aim of the plan is to ensure that the council is compliant with statutory legislation and best practice guidance. This will reduce the risk of our tree stock to public safety and stationary assets. |

8. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Reasons for this conclusion | |
| No specific impact on protected characteristics or Welsh language, and sustainable management of tree stock. | |

| | |
|--|--|
| A full impact assessment (second stage) is required | |
| Reasons for this conclusion | |
| | |

| | Name | Position | Signature | Date |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Completed by | Laura Owens | Neighbourhood Asset & Project Manager | L. Owens | 11.10.2024 |
| Signed off by | Mike Roberts | Head of Service/Director | M. Roberts | 24/10/24 |