

Appendix 5

Equality Impact Assessment

See the leaflet *How to make an Equality Impact Assessment* for help 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 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 Equality Impact Assessment should be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

I Details

I.1. What is the name of the policy / service in question?

Local Toilets Strategy

I.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service that is being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

Local Toilets Strategy

The Public Health Act (Wales) 2017 received Royal Assent on 3 July 2017. The Act brings a range of practical measures together to improve and safeguard health. Section 8 of the Act presents the work of providing toilets, and specifically local toilet strategies.

The aim of Section 8 is to improve the way the provision of toilets available for public use is planned, by ensuring that every local authority in Wales assesses the needs of their communities in terms of toilets, and then use a strategic and transparent method of meeting that need in the best possible way.

The process of developing the strategy intends to make it possible for us to consider the wider options available in terms of providing toilets for the public, and getting to grips with the current challenges relating to providing facilities within communities, as well as a serious reduction in the service budget.

In developing a Local Toilets Strategy for Gwynedd we have considered the impact on service users, employees and the wider community. It is likely that the strategy will have more of an impact on some protected characteristics than others, however, we trust that we have given

consideration to this, and will try to mitigate the negative impact in our aims.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Amanda Murray – Project Manager, Highways and Municipal

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

November 2018 - Start
April 2019 – Current assessment

2) Action

2.1 Who are the partners it will be necessary to work with to undertake this assessment?

Highways and Municipal Department Officers
The Public
Groups with protected characteristics
Town and Community Councils
Relevant Third Sector Organisations
Tourism Organisations
Community Scrutiny Committee

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

As part of Consultation - 'What services are important to you?' and Public Toilets Questionnaire we engaged with:

Self-advocacy Group
Gwynedd Older People's Council
Core Equality Group that represents the following groups:

- Refugees Group;
- Cytûn;
- Meirionnydd Access Group;
- Gwynedd Older People's Council;
- Men's Sheds Caernarfon;
- Hunaniaith

- Bangor Indians and Friends Association
- Unique Transgender Network;
- Council of Sign Sight Sound;
- North Wales Independent Advocacy Service;
- Victim Support Centre;
- Bangor Islamic Centre
- LGBT Group + GISDA

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

Disability

38% of those who stated that they had a disability under section 6 (1) of the Equality Act 2010, state that public toilets opening hours were not suitable for them, compared with 26% in general. .

16.7% of those who stated they had a disability under section 6 (1) of the Equality Act 2010, stated that the facilities are not accessible to them, compared with 6.7% in general.

Main observations in terms of disability were:

Facilities unsuitable for residents who frequently need to use the toilet.

Facilities unsuitable for residents with disabilities

Facilities unsuitable for residents with a specific medical condition e.g. bowel/bladder

Age

In the Public Toilets questionnaire, 8.9% of people under 25 stated that they 'Never' use public toilets compared with 2.3% in general. In addition, 13.3% of those under 25 stated that they used the toilets 'Daily' compared with 17.3% in general.

Gwynedd Older People's Council

Public toilets was one of the most important services for this group. The group noted that sufficient toilets were required in public places to enable older people to go out and travel with confidence.

Pregnancy and Maternity

In the Public Toilets questionnaire, 78% of the responders (except for those who did not answer and noted that the question was not relevant) stated that the facilities were not suitable for baby/children changing.

The assessment of need has identified that many public toilets do not have baby changing facilities. Noted that those with such facilities are often dirty and unsuitable, as well as being very cold for baby changing. Others noted that there was insufficient room, especially when taking into account that many also have prams. Others would like more privacy when changing their baby, rather than being in view of other users.

Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment

LGBT Group and GISDA were consulted. Some noted that the Council needs to provide gender neutral toilets and the facilities were currently unsuitable, dirty and closed too early.

Religion or Belief (or non-belief)

Although the results of the Public Toilets Questionnaire did not highlight that there would be any impact on this feature, it is worth noting that we did consider that for some religions using alternative private facilities may entail that they would be restricted in using some establishments (e.g. pubs) - it could be against their religion or belief.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence do you operate?

Disability

Charities and organisations which represent older people are of the opinion that cuts to public facilities will have a very damaging impact in terms of them being prevented or being afraid of venturing out of their homes due to the lack of facilities available in the community. Some conditions or impairments could make the impact worse.

According to the Crohn's & Colitis UK charity at least 300,000 people in the UK have Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis, known as 'Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

Age

"Help the Aged" paper: Nowhere to Go: Provision of Public Facilities in Britain (May 2007) highlights the social cost for older people due to the reduction in public facilities:

12% of older people (1.2 million) feel confined to their homes, 13% of older people (1.26 million) do not go out more than once a week and approximately 100,000 never go out.

Its evidence suggests that the lack of public facilities is a significant contributory factor to the loneliness older people feel, with more than half of older people feeling that the lack of local public conveniences prevent them from going out as often as they would wish.

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

There is no specific information relating to Gwynedd or lower geographical area about health conditions such as Crohn's Disease and Colitis, nor tourism trends and demands.

3) Identifying the Impact

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

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including ethnicity)	Positive / negative / none	No impact
The Welsh language	Positive / negative / none	No impact
Disability	Positive / negative / none	<p>Positive</p> <p>As part of the Local Toilets Strategy, the Council will:</p> <p>Undertake a review of the cleaning arrangements, opening hours, which are part of the aim to provide 'Provision of clean, safe, appropriately maintained facilities'.</p> <p>This will respond to concerns about hygiene standards and unsuitable opening hours.</p> <p>We will work on maximising the choice of toilet provision and promote under the aim in order to maximise the availability of toilets by working in partnership with an alternative provision.</p> <p>We will advertise the locations and facilities available in the toilets as per our aim to 'Publicise and promote toilet provision information through webpages and other media'.</p> <p>New 'Changing Places' toilets are open at Caernarfon's Welsh Highland Railway Station. The toilets include special equipment such as a Hoist, adequate space in the changing area for the disabled person. For further information about 'Changing Places' Toilets, go to: http://www.changing-places.org/</p>
Gender	Positive / negative / none	We have not identified any current impact as no major changes will be made to the assets that exist.

		Some observations in the Public Toilets Questionnaire noted that some would feel uncomfortable in sharing toilets with people of a different sex.
Age	Positive / negative / none	As part of the Local Toilets Strategy, the Council will: Work on maximising the choice of toilet provision and promote these as per our aim in order to maximise the availability of toilets by working in partnership with an alternative provision. We will advertise the locations and facilities available in the toilets as per our aim to 'Publicise and promote toilet provision information through webpages and other media'. We aim to 'Ensuring public awareness of toilet location, through good direction signage and individual facility information', giving consideration to how we can improve signs and direct people to the toilets and make them easier to find.
Sexual orientation	Positive / negative / none	We have not identified any current impact as no major changes will be made to the assets that exist.
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	Positive / negative / none	Some religions may be limited when using alternative private facilities in certain establishments (e.g. public houses) - as this may be against their religion or belief. In order to meet this need the Local Toilets Strategy will: Continue to work with Town and Community Councils and groups and organisations to ensure a wide choice of provision and retain as many traditional public toilets open as possible to maximise the availability of toilets by working in partnership with an alternative provision.
Gender reassignment	Positive / negative / none	We have not identified any current impact as no major changes will be made to the assets that exist. The Council of course supports a transgender person to use the toilet that person feels most comfortable to use, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive / negative / none	Parents and guardians of babies and young children need to be able to use suitable facilities in men and women's public facilities when visiting public places and often at short notice. In response to a concern regarding the scarcity of facilities and that their hygiene standards are low, the Council will conduct a review of cleaning arrangements, and undertake an audit of baby changing places for provision of clean, safe, appropriately maintained facilities.

Marriage and civil partnership	Positive / negative / none	No impact

* Delete as required

3.2 The Council has a duty under the Equalities 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 give due attention to the way any change affects these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?	In what way? What is the evidence?
Abolishing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	No
Promoting equal opportunities	Yes	Due to our aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise and promote toilet provision information through webpages and other media; Ensuring public awareness of toilet location, through good direction signage and individual facility information signs
Encouraging good relationships	Yes	Our aims promote and support the fostering of good relationships by better advertising of the facilities, locations and the opening hours to enable older people to be more confident when they go out.

* Delete as required

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 Duty? What is the reason for this?

Generally, the Local Toilets Strategy will have a positive impact on the equality characteristics noted in part 3.1.

The aim of the strategy is to seek to improve the way the provision of toilets available for public use is provided. In developing the strategy, the Council has assessed the needs of its communities in terms of toilets, and has used the information to propose our 6 aims in order

seek to meet this need in the best possible way within budget, and where appropriate.

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the equality characteristics or the General Duty? What is the reason for this?

No

4.3 What should be done?

Select one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	
Adapt the policy to delete any barriers	
Suspend and delete the policy as the detrimental impacts are too big	
Continue with the policy as any detrimental impact can be justified	

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

Not relevant

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

Not relevant

5) Monitoring

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

As part of the Strategy, the Council will formulate and publish an 'interim progress statement' explaining the measures it has taken in accordance with its strategy.

The Council will review the strategy and formulate a period end progress statement within a year following all usual local government elections.