



## **Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessments: Guidance for Local Authorities (February 2016)**

Guidance weblink:

[http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/Publications/pub-story/16-02-16/Section 12 Guidance Equality and Human Rights Assessments Scrutiny.aspx](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/Publications/pub-story/16-02-16/Section_12_Guidance_Equality_and_Human_Rights_Assessments_Scrutiny.aspx)

### **Good Practice**

#### **Wrexham**

Wrexham County Borough Council, with support from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Welsh Local Government Association, has developed 'Equality Impact Assessment: Are We Being Fair?' The template covers all equality assessment needs from initial screening to a full Impact Assessment by following the six steps<sup>1</sup>:

- Screening the equality needs of the proposal
- Data collection and evidence
- Involvement and consultation
- Assessing impact and strengthening the proposal
- Procurement and partnerships
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

In addition, the Council also considers poverty, caring and the Welsh language as additional characteristics for the purposes of EIAs. By taking a wider view of the protected characteristics the Council hopes to encourage a more holistic approach to the needs of all communities in designing or delivering their services.

#### **Vale of Glamorgan**

In the Vale of Glamorgan, the County Council proposed a reconfiguration of the Adult Community Learning Service due to funding reductions to the Adult Community Learning Grant. Engagement with the

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/top\\_navigation/equality.htm](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/top_navigation/equality.htm)

Older Persons Forum found that older learners would be significantly impacted by the proposal, affecting their ability to gain new skills to re-enter or remain in the labour market. As the EIA demonstrated that older people would be directly affected by the proposal, the County Council decided to work closely with the Strategy Coordinator and Older Persons Forum to secure additional funding for the future development of new course provision for older learners and others<sup>2</sup>.

This resulted in the Council agreeing to set a discretionary rate for older learners in the cost recovery programme model that ensured that the Arts, Leisure and Wellbeing Programme remained affordable but financially sustainable in the longer term. In addition, the free Skills and Employability Programme 'Get Back on Track' continues to be well used by older learners and increased numbers amongst men who are 50 years old and older.

### **Betsi Cadwaladr**

In a Welsh context, a human rights based approach is not new. For example, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has put human rights at the heart of a toolkit for ward sisters and charge nurses focusing on nutrition and hydration<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the Board's Equality Impact Assessment incorporates human rights alongside protected characteristics<sup>4</sup>. The outcomes have been improved knowledge and awareness about human rights, and the provision of useful learning and a practical human rights based toolkit which other health organisations may wish to adopt.

### **Bridgend**

Bridgend County Borough Council proposed to relocate Bridgend's central library to a newly refurbished life centre that is being operated in partnership with social enterprise Halo Leisure. The EIA identified the potential impact of the proposal on both younger and older people. A series of consultation events were held together with online and paper versions of the consultation document. Although it was found that the proposal positively impacted on people of all ages due to better facilities and opportunities, feedback also suggested that some older people would find it difficult to visit the new location.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2014/14-07-14/Adult-Community-Learning-Service-Restructure---Part-1---Appendix-2.PDF>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/861/nutrition\\_hydration.pdf](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/861/nutrition_hydration.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/836/Chirk%20MIU%20update\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/836/Chirk%20MIU%20update_1_.pdf)

Ensuring that existing users were not disadvantaged was identified as a priority, and a range of options were therefore explored, including a shop-mobility extension to the new library location, awareness raising of bus routes and increased service provision. The result is a more accessible central library, an additional bus stop for library and life centre users, and parking concessions for users of the library car park. Older people can access a range of services through the co-location, including the free swimming initiative, exercise referral, indoor bowling and a cafeteria to support social participation<sup>5</sup>.

### Conwy

Conwy County Borough Council used local socio-demographic information and consultation to avoid radical cuts in its library services that might have impacted adversely on older people and disabled people. 'As a result of the consultation, the library service extended its mobile library and home library coverage, amended opening times in their five major libraries and has been engaged in working with local communities to set up Community Libraries in five localities to suit community demands. This has included greater use of volunteers to enhance the core service provided by the Local Authority'.

Through working with the community, who have taken over the management of library buildings while the Local Authority provides a full professional library service, this work has prevented the five smaller libraries from being closed<sup>6</sup>.

### Monmouthshire

According to the Public Sector Equality Duty review in Wales, Monmouthshire County Council has improved its EIA process, now requiring all proposals to Council to come with a completed EIA that is considered early on in the decision-making process. This new approach resulted in various outcomes for the community. For example, a proposal to turn off street lights at night was found to be potentially distressing for older people. Following an appeals process, the proposal was therefore amended to ensure it does not discriminate against older people<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Bridgend County Borough Council Report to Cabinet (December 2012) 'Welsh Public Library Standards and the proposal to relocate Bridgend Town Library to Bridgend Recreation Centre'

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/review-public-sector-equality-duty-psed-wales>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/review-public-sector-equality-duty-psed-wales>