

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Steffan Gealy

Service Director: Wendy Edwards

Service Area: Community Services

Date: 21/4/22

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Welsh Language 5 Year Promotion Strategy 2022-27

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The Council is required to produce a Five-Year Strategy to facilitate and promote the Welsh Language in the county under Standard 145 of the Compliance Notice issued under section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The first Five Year Strategy was approved in 2016 and was published, as required, on the Council’s website on 30th October 2016. This Strategy was reviewed and its associated Action Plan assessed by an external organisation (Nico Cyf) in line with statutory requirements.

This is the second Five-Year Strategy that builds on the work done by the Council and its partners to promote and facilitate the Welsh language over the past five years.

As part of the Strategy the Council is required to set a percentage target for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in our area by the end of the 5 year period concerned.

The vision is to develop Rhondda Cynon Taf as a fully bilingual county; a County Borough where residents can live, work and play, as well as access the services and support they need through the medium of Welsh and English.

This Strategy will continue to focus on the 3 main national themes which are as follows:

Theme 1: Increasing the number of Welsh speakers (focussing on Language transmission in the family; the early years; statutory education; post-compulsory education and the education workforce, resources and qualifications)

Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh (focussing on the workplace; services, and social use of Welsh)

Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context (specifically community and economy; culture and media; Wales and the wider world; digital technology; linguistic infrastructure; language planning; evaluation and research)

The Strategy has been subject to a public consultation both online and face-to-face and this feedback as well as the recommendations made by the evaluation of the previous Strategy and Action Plan are reflected in the document.

The aims of the Strategy cannot be achieved by the Council alone. Council partners will all play a key role in delivering this second Strategy and as such all Council service areas will be encouraged to continue to foster their relationships with the identified partners in the Strategy's Action Plan in order to achieve their targets.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy has been influenced by the following legislation and drivers:

- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 gives the Welsh language official status in Wales and established the post of Welsh Language Commissioner whose role includes the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. It established the principle that, in Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language in Wales, and the principle that persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

RCT's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will ensure that these principles are implemented in RCT.

The Measure also imposes standards on bodies that are designed to give legal effect to the official status of the Welsh language in Wales.

- Welsh language standards regulation (No. 1) 2015 are subordinate legislation that includes a list of standards that the Welsh Language Commissioner can impose on each relevant body and there is a Code of Practice for the Welsh language standards (No. 1) 2015 produced as guidance by the Commissioner to support implementation of the standards. RCT received its Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner in 2015 which indicated which standards from the regulations the Council was required to comply with and the date from which compliance was required.

Standard 145 requires that the Council write and publish a strategy and action plan every 5 years and Standard 146 requires that after the end of the five years we assess the

(a) extent to which the strategy has been followed and the extent to which the target set by it has been reached, and

(b) publish that assessment on our website, ensuring that it contains the following information:

(i) the number of Welsh speakers in our area, and the age of those speakers;

(ii) a list of the activities that have been arranged or funded during the previous 5 years in order to promote the use of the Welsh language.

- Cymraeg 2050 is the Welsh Government's National Strategy to reach one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The vision is that by the year 2050, the Welsh language will be thriving, the number of speakers will have reached a million, and it will be used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there will be goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society and economy of Wales.

RCT's Strategy for the Promotion of the Welsh Language aligns with this vision and includes the 3 priorities and areas of focus outlined in this document.

- The Welsh Government's 'More than Just Words' strategic framework document for Welsh Language services in health, social services and social care. The original framework was launched in 2012, and an updated framework in 2016. The document notes that language and health go hand-in-hand and that the quality of care can be adversely affected if a person cannot communicate in their preferred language. Its aim is to ensure that the language needs of Welsh speakers are met and one of its objectives that correlates to the proposed Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022/27 is to increase the use of Welsh across health and social care workplaces.

- The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will contribute to several of the Well-being goals identified in the Well-being of Future Generations 2015 including:

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- A more Equal Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language.
- The WLPS reflects priorities identified in Welsh Government's 'More than Just Words' Framework for
- Social Services and Well-being Act
- The WLPS aligns with the Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2021-26 which commits to:
 - Legislate to strengthen and increase Welsh language education provision.
 - Expand the proportion of the Education Workforce who can teach and work through the Welsh language
 - Continue to push towards one million Welsh speakers by 2050
- The Welsh Language is a cross-cutting theme in the Council's Corporate Plan and affects each of the 3 main priorities:
 - ensuring people are independent, healthy, and successful
 - creating places where people are proud to live, work and play
 - enabling Prosperity, creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper.
- There is a close link and an interrelationship between the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in RCT and the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 as there is a focus in both documents on increasing the numbers of children attending Welsh-medium education and developing and using their Welsh language skills in all schools as well as in community venues.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>)	Positive	All ages: The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy ensures that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language in RCT. As such it will benefit every resident whose preferred means of communication is Welsh. It highlights the work that will be done by Council services and their partners to ensure access to the widest range of opportunities possible from accessing Council services in Welsh to provision of social and cultural activities.	RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22 outlines the Council's commitment to providing strong community leadership and effective services for the people of RCT so that they can fulfil their potential and prosper.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>The Strategy is very wide-ranging with a focus on 3 key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increasing the number of Welsh speakers - increasing the use of the Welsh language - creating conditions that encourage people to use Welsh <p>Older people:</p> <p>Ensuring that the Welsh language is considered by the Council and its partners in the services and information that they provide and the activities that they facilitate will ensure that older people's need to engage in activities in Welsh will be met. This will reduce social isolation and loneliness among this age group.</p> <p>Children and Young People:</p> <p>The Strategy will increase opportunities for children and young people to access learning through the medium of Welsh from pre-school through to primary and secondary education helping to provide them with the best start in life. It aligns closely with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which also ensures that pupils in English-medium</p>	<p>Welsh Language Skills of RCT Residents according to the 2011 Census:</p> <p>Can Read Welsh 18.2% Can Write Welsh 16.7% Can Understand Spoken Welsh 23.5%</p> <p>However, the Annual Population Survey Sept 2020 indicated that 19.3% of respondents in RCT said they could speak Welsh.</p> <p>The Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment undertaken in 2017 by the Cwm Taf Public Services Board to inform the Cwm Taf Well</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>schools access Welsh language learning and opportunities.</p> <p>Currently 7,233 pupils in RCT attend Welsh-medium primary and secondary schools. In addition, 505 pupils in English medium schools sat GCSE (First Language) Welsh and 1,708 sat GCSE (Second Language) Welsh so that there are significant numbers of children and young people who have fluent or near-fluent Welsh language skills. It is important therefore that they can use these skills outside of schools.</p> <p>The Strategy will ensure that there are more opportunities for children and young people to use their Welsh language skills outside of school for example by enhancing access to holiday and extra-curricular provision in Welsh. 65.2% of people who responded to the public consultation undertaken on the proposed strategy indicated that they wanted to see more Welsh Language Youth provision while just under 60% indicated the importance of ensuring more early years provision in Welsh.</p> <p>The Action Plan that will deliver the Strategy will support the development and strengthening of the Welsh language Youth Forum by the Welsh language partners</p>	<p>being Plan 2018-2023 recognised that loneliness, isolation and a reduced sense of belonging are significant issues for people in our communities. Lack of access to services and activities in a person's language of choice can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation.</p> <p>Professor Ellen Bialystok has advocated on behalf of the benefits of bilingualism and in the research paper: Bilingualism: Consequences for Mind and Brain https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3322418/ discusses the link between bilingualism and cognitive wellness, stating that bilingualism has a somewhat muted effect in adulthood but a larger role in older age, protecting against cognitive decline, a concept known as “cognitive reserve”.</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>so that young people have a voice in identifying their needs and aspirations regarding opportunities for them to use the Welsh language in different contexts.</p> <p>Another action to support the increased use of the Welsh language among young people includes collaborating with partners to develop and promote a wider range of Welsh language learning pathways into the world of work, training, apprenticeships and further/higher education for 14-19 yr olds.</p> <p>Studies have shown that bilingual children can outperform children who are monolingual in a number of subject areas. It increases awareness of other cultures and makes learning a third language easier. (10 Benefits of Being Bilingual - www.babbel.com/en/magazine/the-many-benefits-of-being-bilingual).</p> <p>Research led by Professor Andrew Henley of Aberystwyth University reveals that employees who can speak both Welsh and English can earn between 8% and 10% more than their monolingual counterparts. (Prof. Andrew Henley's paper on Earnings and Linguistic Proficiency in a Bilingual Economy: http://fmwww.bc.edu/repec/res2003/Henley.pdf)</p>	<p>The implementation of this Strategy by the Council and its partners will create more opportunities for older people to continue to use these skills.</p> <p>Data from the Welsh Government's National Survey 2019/20 seems to support this with only between 53% and 55% of older age groups of Welsh speakers indicating that they used the language on a daily basis supporting the need for additional opportunities within communities to use the language.</p> <p>Data from the Welsh Government's National Survey for Wales 2019/20 indicates that the frequency of language use is varied by age. Over two thirds of Welsh speaking 3-15 year olds spoke Welsh daily, the highest of any age group - this most likely reflects the fact that they use it at school.</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>Psycho-linguist Professor Ellen Bialystok of York University, Toronto has indicated that it is impossible to say whether bilingualism improves a child's exam results as this involves so many factors. However as 'no study has shown it (bilingualism) harms performance- considering the very many social and cultural benefits to knowing another language, bilingualism should be encouraged.' (BBC Future - The Amazing Benefits of Being Bilingual).</p>	<p>Younger adults had the lowest rates for speaking Welsh daily - 45% of Welsh speaking 16-29 year olds spoke Welsh daily. A lack of opportunities for them to use the language in their communities and in social activities has been identified as a possible reason for this and the Strategy intends to address some of these barriers to language use.</p> <p>The benefits and positive effect of bilingualism and learning/using Welsh for all age groups has been highlighted in a paper by Colin Baker for the Rapporteur Group entitled: 'The advantages of bilingualism in Welsh and English' which includes international academic research.</p>
Disability	Positive	<p>The strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure that people of all ages who have a range of disabilities will be able to access the information and 	<p>The importance of effective communication in healthcare has been established for many years -</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i>		<p>advice they need in the medium of Welsh in their preferred format, including (capacity and technology allowing) using Welsh subtitles on public facing videos as well as utilising the relevant audio technology (e.g. hearing loops) for the deaf and hard of hearing. This will potentially improve their care, and possibly their health outcomes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support the 'More than Just Words' framework ensuring that Council staff and commissioned providers have access to Welsh Language learning so that they can communicate in Welsh with those in their care; - ensure that more activities are available in Welsh both through Council services and partners thereby reducing their sense of isolation and loneliness, improving their well-being and increasing their sense of belonging within their communities; <p>Promoting bilingualism and creating an environment where there are opportunities to use the Welsh language regularly has a positive effect on health and wellbeing over the longer term which is especially important for people who already have health conditions.</p>	<p>for example as early as 1993 in an Audit Commission Report. A GMC report in 1998 reiterated the importance of effective communication on enabling patients to make informed decisions.</p> <p>A lack of services in Welsh in the context of health and social care can be regarded as 'a failure to provide basic requirements.' Certain groups have been identified as having an even more fundamental need for Welsh language service provision and these have been identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children and young people - older people - people with learning difficulties - mental health service users - dementia services - stroke services - speech and language services

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>Furthermore lifelong bilingualism confers protection against the onset of Alzheimer's disease. (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3033609/)</p> <p>Intersectionality - disability and age:</p> <p>The Strategy will have a positive impact on people who are older and disabled. Older people are far more likely than others to be living in residential homes. It is vitally important therefore that these homes recognise the importance of language as a component of the care provided. The Strategy and the Action Plan that will accompany it will provide support for Council services that provide social care to ensure that the Welsh language is fully embedded in everything they do.</p>	<p>Some of the above services are delivered by the Council or its commissioned providers and the Strategy outlines how we will continue to ensure that the Council meets its responsibilities in these areas.</p> <p>The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages establishes the principle under Article 13 that 'social care facilities such as hospitals, retirement homes and hostels offer the possibility of receiving and treating in their own language persons using a regional or minority language which are in need of care on grounds of ill-health, old age or for other reasons.'</p> <p>Researchers are finding a significant number of benefits from speaking more than one language including faster stroke recovery and delayed onset of dementia.</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
			(Gaia Vince 12/8/2016 - The amazing benefits of being bilingual). This research is widely supported - www.ed.ac.uk/news/2015/stroke-191115 .
Gender Reassignment (<i>anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities</i>)	Positive	<p>As well as providing the opportunities created by this Strategy that are relevant to other people - increased opportunities to access Welsh-medium learning and activities etc- there is an additional benefit for people that have this characteristic.</p> <p>Gender reassignment can include a range of medical interventions and as indicated above the Welsh Government and a wide range of medical experts and others recognise the direct link between quality of care and provision of services in the patient's preferred language.</p> <p>While this Strategy does not directly apply to the Health Service, it will affect the provision of support and advice by Council services to people with this protected characteristic including sign-posting of people to relevant sources of information and advice available in the Welsh language where appropriate.</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p> <p>'More than Just Words' framework</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Positive	The Strategy will have a positive impact on people in this category by creating more opportunities for them to use their Welsh, to learn Welsh if they want to and to access Council services in Welsh. Most specifically the Strategy will have a positive effect on people in this category as they will continue to be able to marry or have a civil ceremony at the Registrar's office through the medium of Welsh if that is their preference.	RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22
Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Positive	<p>People with these protected characteristics will benefit from this Strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having access to advice and support from relevant Council services and provision in Welsh if preferred; - having access to Welsh language courses during work time if they are employed by the Council, or in the community by one of our partners if they are not employed by the Council; - having information and advice in relation to early years provision and school options in Welsh as well as access to Welsh-medium education for their children if required; - having access to social and cultural activities including parent and baby sessions in Welsh etc. 	<p>Access to information and advice in a person's preferred language as indicated previously is vitally important for health and wellbeing no less so than during pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>'More than just Words' framework</p> <p>Parents who are non-Welsh speaking but send their children to Welsh-medium schools share the positive effects of this: https://meithrin.cymru/news/mudiad-meithrin-releases-video-to-</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>The Welsh Language Promotional Strategy Action Plan will take account of recommendations outlined in research: the Qualitative study of beliefs, behaviours and barriers affecting parental decisions regarding childcare and early education. It explores how mothers are not accessing provision they are entitled to. We will take account of the research findings and recommendations to inform our targeting and informing parents when developing the Welsh Language Promotional Action Plan.</p> <p>Full Research Report Hughes, Buddug and Jones, Kathryn (2021) available at: https://gov.wales/parent-beliefs-behaviours-and-barriers-childcare-and-early-education</p>	<p>attract-non-welsh-speaking-parents-to-welsh-medium-education/?lang=en</p> <p>https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2021-01/qualitative-study-of-beliefs-behaviours-and-barriers-affecting-parental-decisions-regarding-childcare-and-early-education.pdf</p>
<p>Race <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i></p>	Positive	<p>People of all races can learn Welsh in all educational settings – from pre-school settings, statutory school-age settings, post-16 and via adult education settings locally through the Welsh For Adults provision and/or through online provision.</p> <p>An article on BBC Wales News website highlights the readiness and success of refugees who are engaging in learning Welsh as an additional language to those they</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>are already conversant with. (www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-Wales/59795982)</p> <p>The easy accessibility of online learning saw the number of people learning Welsh rise to 1.3 million during Lockdown. (www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-52890175)</p> <p>Duolingo saw a 44% increase in people learning Welsh on its app and its 2020 report indicated that Welsh was the fastest growing language in the UK.</p> <p>There are positive impacts for individuals who learn additional languages in respect of their ability to communicate with others. However, another positive impact is that it provides another window on the world and enables a person to develop an awareness of other cultures and an appreciation of the advantages of living in diverse communities.</p> <p>The Welsh Government has added learning about the diversity of communities, in particular the stories of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, into the new Curriculum for Wales, due to be introduced from September 2022, following years of work by teachers and other education professionals in its development.</p>	

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>Therefore, the proposed Strategy will have a beneficial impact on people of other races in several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it will enable those who are learning Welsh to practise their skills and engage in activities in their local communities, thereby reducing social isolation and improving community cohesion; - it will ensure that people from minority ethnic communities are targeted as part of the Communication and Marketing Plan which will be developed to promote the benefits of being bilingual; - it will help people to develop a wider understanding of different cultures and the opportunities they offer to broaden horizons. 	
Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including</i>	Positive	<p>People who have this protected characteristic will benefit from the strategy if they wish to use the Welsh language in their day-to-day lives or wish to engage in social, cultural or educational activities in Welsh.</p> <p>Civic events will be required to treat Welsh no differently than the English language for example including Welsh and English hymns in civic services.</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<i>people with no beliefs)</i>			
Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Positive	<p>People of both sexes speak Welsh and may want to access services the Council provides in Welsh and to use the language as the medium in which they live, work and play.</p> <p>The Strategy is an essential element of the way in which the Council will ensure that all people including people of both sexes can do this in Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p>
Sexual Orientation <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Positive	<p>People of all different sexual orientations speak Welsh and may want to use their Welsh in their daily lives in their communities.</p> <p>People who have this protected characteristic may need to access information and advice on 'coming out' or to access counselling support in their preferred language (among other things).</p> <p>Any corporate support to national events, such as Pride, will give Welsh language a platform encouraging LGBTQ+ community groups to use Welsh too, which not only normalises the use of the language, but important in terms of the well-being of individuals.</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p> <p>RCTCBC Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011</p>

<u>Protected Characteristic</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		Having a Five Year Strategy that outlines how the Council and its partners will facilitate this will have positive benefits for this group.	

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Armed Forces Community <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Positive	The Strategy will have a positive impact on members of the Armed Forces Community who want to be able to use their Welsh language as they live, work and play or who wish to learn Welsh. Examples of these positive effects include: - having opportunities to access Welsh language classes in their community (or,	RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22 Public Sector Duty More than just Words Framework

Appendix 3

		<p>if they work for the Council, at their workplace during work time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to early years and Welsh-medium provision at schools - access to social, cultural and leisure activities in the Welsh language - access to advice, support and counselling if appropriate in their preferred language <p>The Strategy aligns with the 'More than just Words' framework with its emphasis on engaging people in their preferred language in order to improve health outcomes. For veterans this could be an important element affecting their longer-term wellbeing.</p>	
<p>Carers <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The Strategy will have positive effects for carers who speak Welsh and who wish to access information, advice and support in the Welsh language as it will provide Welsh language skills training to the Council's workforce to ensure the Council has sufficient</p>	<p>RCT Strategic Equality Plan 2019/22</p> <p>Public Sector Duty</p> <p>More than just Words Framework</p>

Appendix 3

		numbers of staff to deliver provision in Welsh. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out overarching duties to help people who need care and support and carers who need support. Having regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of an individual is paramount in supporting people to achieve well-being. For many Welsh speakers, language is an integral element of achieving their care.	Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
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If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant, please provide an adequate explanation below:

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?

Yes

No

Name: Wendy Edwards

Position: Service Director Community Services

Date: 21/04/22

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single parents and vulnerable families• Pensioners• Looked after children• Homeless people• Students• Single adult households	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People living in the most deprived areas in Wales• People with low literacy and numeracy• People who have experienced the asylum system• People misusing substances• People of all ages leaving a care setting• People involved in the criminal justice system
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<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p>Low Income/Income Poverty <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	Positive	<p>Children and young people:</p> <p>22% of children aged 0-19 are in relative low-income families in Rhondda Cynon Taff compared with 20% across Wales (RCT Community Insights Report 2022).</p> <p>8,944 households in RCT are lone parent households with dependent children.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and its associated Action Plan will ensure that children from low-income households who speak Welsh and/or who attend Welsh-medium schools will have increased opportunities to use the Welsh language in their communities in social situations. The focus will be on ensuring that whatever support or materials that are available in English will also be available in Welsh - this will be of benefit to Welsh speakers and learners of all ages.</p> <p>Pupils receiving their education in the medium of Welsh often travel outside of the usual catchment areas to</p>	<p>NOMIS data Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)</p> <p>Community Insights RCT Data (February 2022)</p> <p>Joseph Rowntree Foundation: UK Poverty Report 2022</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>access provision. Ensuring that they are able to engage in extra-curricular activities without the need to meet additional costs will help people on low income, especially with regards to travelling costs as Welsh medium settings tend to be dispersed than English medium settings.</p> <p>Providing access to Welsh-medium education will also ensure that children from low-income households have an additional key skill (being able to speak Welsh and offer employers 2 languages) when it comes to looking for and gaining employment.</p> <p>The Action Plan that will accompany the strategy will consider how digital poverty might impact on Welsh language engagement and put steps in place to mitigate this to ensure all residents of RCT are able to fully access opportunities to enjoy, learn and speak Welsh.</p>	<p>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p> <p>The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Skills in Eight Sectors Report 2014 indicated that 'just over a third of employers surveyed in the eight sectors covered in the research regarded having staff with Welsh language skills at their establishment as very (18%) or fairly important (17%). (It was higher in childcare, agri-food and social care). Social care is an area where there have been significant vacancies in RCT (and other areas) over a period of years.</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>Pensioners:</p> <p>The Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty Report 2022 indicates that pensioner poverty has risen by five percentage points to almost a fifth of pensioners by 2019/20. There are 21,378 pensioner households in RCT. Although there is no definite information available on how many pensioner households in RCT are in poverty, based on the UK percentage, as many as 5,344 may fall into this category (if not more as the level of deprivation is higher in RCT than the UK average).</p> <p>Ensuring access to services and activities in Welsh will ensure that language is not a barrier to the accessing support to meet their needs.</p>	
<p>Low and / or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with</i></p>	Positive	<p>Children and young people:</p> <p>22% of children aged 0-19 are in relative low-income families in Rhondda Cynon Taff compared with</p>	<p>NOMIS data Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<i>any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>		<p>20% across Wales (RCT Community Insights Report 2022).</p> <p>8,944 households in RCT are lone parent households with dependent children.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and its associated Action Plan will ensure that children from low-income households who speak Welsh and/or who attend Welsh-medium schools will have increased opportunities to use the Welsh language in their communities in social situations. The focus will be on ensuring that whatever support or materials that are available in English will also be available in Welsh - this will be of benefit to Welsh speakers and learners of all ages.</p> <p>Pupils receiving their education in the medium of Welsh often travel outside of the usual catchment areas to access provision. Ensuring that they are able to engage in extra-curricular activities without the need to meet additional costs will help people on low income, especially with regards to travelling costs as Welsh medium</p>	<p>Community Insights RCT Data (February 2022)</p> <p>Joseph Rowntree Foundation: UK Poverty Report 2022</p> <p>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>settings tend to be dispersed than English medium settings.</p> <p>As with children in poverty, being able to access Welsh-medium education will provide an advantage in the workplace especially within key sectors such as childcare, social care and frontline services in public sector organisations.</p> <p>The Action Plan that will accompany the strategy will consider how digital poverty might impact on Welsh language engagement and put steps in place to mitigate this to ensure all residents of RCT are able to fully access opportunities to enjoy, learn and speak Welsh.</p> <p>Pensioners:</p> <p>The Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty Report 2022 indicates that pensioner poverty has risen by five percentage points to almost a fifth of pensioners by 2019/20. There</p>	

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>are 21,378 pensioner households in RCT. Although there is no definite information available on how many pensioner households in RCT are in poverty, based on the UK percentage, as many as 5,344 may fall into this category (if not more as the level of deprivation is higher in RCT than the UK average).</p> <p>Ensuring access to services and activities in Welsh will ensure that language is not a barrier to the accessing support to meet their needs.</p>	
<p><u>Material Deprivation</u> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p>	Positive	<p>7% of pensioners living in Wales between 2017/18 and 2019/20 were in material deprivation.</p> <p>The Strategy will have a positive impact on this deprived group by ensuring that they can access information and advice on a range of issues that affect them, including requesting discretionary grants where applicable, in their preferred language.</p>	<p>Welsh Government indicated that being unable to access services in Welsh may contribute to material deprivation and socio-economic disadvantage. (Material deprivation and low income: April 2019 to March 2020 GOV.WALES)</p> <p>Material deprivation in the above was measured by asking respondents if they had access to 21 goods and</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>Under this Strategy a range of Council services and their partners are able to deliver social, leisure and cultural opportunities in the Welsh language and to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. In effect if activities in English are free, then the same will be true for activities provided in Welsh.</p> <p>14% of children living in Wales in 2017/18 and 2019/20 were in material deprivation and low income households. There are significant benefits for these children and their families from accessing education, youth and sport provision, reading materials etc in Welsh which will be supported through the Action Plan that will be developed to implement this strategy.</p> <p>Adopting a partnership approach with Welsh-medium organisations to the provision of activities and services will ensure that opportunities are maximised to normalise the language</p>	<p>services (15 if they are over 65).</p>

Appendix 3

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		so that it can be used in all areas of life and work in RCT and benefit current and future generations whatever their economic or social circumstances.	

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><u>Area Deprivation</u> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i></p>	Positive	<p>RCTCBC and its adjoining areas in the South Wales valleys contain some of the most deprived areas in Wales.</p> <p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) highlights 8 categories that are assessed when considering levels of deprivation. The following indicates how the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will contribute to some of these key areas:</p> <p>Employment – creating pathways for young people to develop their skills and qualifications will improve their employment prospects. Some Welsh language skills are now required in most roles within the public sector and increasingly recognised as an advantage in other businesses across South-East Wales. Ensuring access to Welsh language courses in the community will increase the employability of adults who are looking for work or wanting promotion within their workplaces.</p>	<p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)</p> <p>Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>RCTCBC Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.</p> <p>The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Skills in Eight Sectors Report 2014 indicated that 'just over a third of employers surveyed in the eight sectors covered in the research regarded having staff with Welsh language skills at their establishment as very (18%) or fairly important (17%). (It was higher in childcare, agri-food and social care).</p> <p>Over a quarter of establishments (28%) believed</p>

		<p>Health - Having access to advice and information in a person's preferred language increases the likelihood of positive health outcomes. Also providing opportunities for people to join local groups and engage in activities in Welsh will reduce social isolation and loneliness of older Welsh-speaking residents. Bilingualism itself has been identified as having a health benefit (as highlighted under 'Age' above) therefore enabling opportunities for people to develop and maintain these skills will potentially improve longer-term health outcomes within communities.</p> <p>Income – People who live in poverty have lower incomes than others. One way of increasing income levels is to improve skills and qualifications. This Strategy will improve access to learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh and will also ensure through work with partners that residents can access Welsh language courses which will result in increased employability and potentially improved wages.</p> <p>Education – the focus on ensuring access to high-quality Welsh medium</p>	<p>that it would benefit them to have more staff able to communicate in Welsh, or more staff with a higher level of Welsh language skills. 7% of establishments expected their need for Welsh language skills to increase in the next 2-3 years. This was higher among Childcare, Social care, Creative and Hospitality employers (28%, 15%, 12% and 10% respectively).'</p> <p>It is reasonable to conclude that if this survey was undertaken in 2022 that the need for Welsh language skills among businesses would be higher due to the impact of more recent legislation on the language.</p> <p>The link between the Welsh Language and the economy is highlighted in 'Prosperity for All: Economic Action Plan' (Welsh Government, 2017) which notes: 'The future of our Welsh-speaking communities and our regional economy are linked.</p>
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		<p>education with pathways to further and higher learning will improve educational opportunities which benefit individuals and the areas in which they live.</p> <p>Access to services – ensuring access to services in Welsh is a key theme in the Strategy. Transport to and from and locations of provision of specific Welsh medium provision should be key considerations in any actions. This will ensure that Welsh speakers have the same access to services in their preferred language as English speakers.</p>	<p>Thriving local economies will support our target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Good quality jobs and regions that are attractive places in which to live, work and invest, will provide people with a reason to remain or return to work and live in communities where the Welsh language thrives. A thriving Welsh language supports business growth and provides tangible opportunities for regional economic development.'</p>
<p>Socio-economic background <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a legal duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to have due regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities.</p> <p>8,944 households with dependent children in RCT are lone parent households - these households are more likely to be in poverty.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will ensure that children whose parents have less disposable income have the equal access to a Welsh-medium education from pre-</p>	<p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).</p> <p>Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>RCTCBC Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.</p> <p>Community Insights RCT Report (February 2022)</p>

		<p>school to primary, secondary, and further learning. The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Skills in Eight Sectors Report 2014 provides some evidence to suggest that people who are bilingual will have an advantage in gaining work. This is especially so since the implementation of the Welsh Language Statutory Standards on public sector organisations which requires these organisations to ensure that they can deliver their services in Welsh as well as English.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will also ensure that there is access to extra-curricular activities in the Welsh language so that children and adults can use their language skills in their communities.</p> <p>In addition, supporting access to Welsh-medium traineeships and apprenticeships will ensure pathways into employment that will enhance their earning potential.</p> <p>Furthermore, embedding Welsh language modules into employability courses targeted at people who are unemployed or economically inactive will enhance opportunities to gain employment, especially good-quality</p>	<p>Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p>
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		posts in a range of sectors that require Welsh language skills.	
<p>Socio-economic disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	Positive	<p>The Strategy will have a positive impact on Welsh speakers as well as Welsh learners who have protected characteristics ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they will be able to engage with Council services in their preferred language; - access education and learning opportunities from pre-school to further and higher education and adult community learning in Welsh; - access advice and information including online in Welsh; - they have enhanced opportunities to engage in social, sporting and cultural activities in Welsh and use the language more frequently in their communities. 	<p>'The Welsh Government sees the development of Welsh learners' language skills through post-16 education and skills programmes as a way of supporting a prosperous economy in Wales.'</p> <p>The Welsh language is also seen as a means of ensuring that Welsh speaking communities share in economic prosperity while the language infra-structure (education, translation industry, translation technology etc) provides a boost to the economy. In addition, for some brands the language provides a unique selling point.</p> <p>(The Welsh Language and the Economy: A Review of Evidence and Methods' 2020)</p>

SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

An action plan to underpin the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy is in development and will be finalised once the new 2021 Census data is published.

- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

No substantial or negative impacts were identified through this assessment.

- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.

No substantial or negative impacts were identified through this assessment.

- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

No substantial or negative impacts were identified through this assessment.

- 4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes

No

SECTION 5 – MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REVIEWING

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-2027 will be Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's second strategy and is a continuation of the first strategy (2016-2021) building on the work done by the Council and our partners to promote and facilitate the language over the past five years. Progress will be monitored via service self-evaluation with a report submitted to the relevant Member committee on an annual basis (currently Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group). Furthermore, at the end of its 5 year cycle, a statutory assessment will be undertaken to evaluate its effectiveness and presented to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

At the end of the five year cycle, in 2027.

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

Welsh Language Services: Service Manager and Senior Compliance Officer.

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

The statutory assessment of the 2022-2027 Strategy will provide recommendations in respect of areas for further development and/or improvement. Members will also be able to assist in developing any future proposals during the annual monitoring process.

SECTION 6 – REVIEW

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Diversity and Inclusion team – equality@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your completed impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. See our guidance document for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in equality/Socio economic considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments

Diversity and Inclusion team Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
All comments/suggestions received from E&D team added prior to submission to review panel	July 2022	
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation
Please see Appendix 2 of main report	Sept 2022	Consultation outcomes were given central consideration when formulating a new strategy.
Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
Need to strengthening citations and evidence base and complete Section 4a.	September 2022	Citations updated as per recommendations, including section for pregnant mothers and those on maternity leave and statement added to Section 4a.

SECTION 7 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Equality Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows:-

The Welsh Language Promotional Strategy has a positive impact on the protected characteristics therefore a full assessment is not required at this time. An action plan to underpin the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy is in development and will be finalised once the new 2021 Census data is published.

SECTION 8 – AUTHORISATIONS

Lead Officer: Yes

Name: Steffan Gealy

Position: Service Manager - Welsh Language Service

Date: 26th September 2022

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval: Yes

Name: Nicola Lewis

Position: Head of Community and Welsh Language Services

Date: 26th September 2022

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.