

## 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: Andrea Richards

Service Director: Gaynor Davies

Service Area: Catering Services, Education & Inclusion Services

Date: 21.11.22

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

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

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

Community Meals Service Review

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

The Council is facing significant financial challenges into the medium term and is considering the remodelling of key service areas to contribute to addressing the shortfall in funding. A review of the Community Meals Service has been undertaken and several options for the future of the service have been evaluated.

Option 1: to continue the service as it currently operates with increased service user charges.

Option 2: to reorganise the existing internal service with increased service user charges.

Option 3: to reorganise the existing internal service and provide a hot/frozen Community Meal home delivery service with increased service user charges.

Option 4: to cease the current service and support service users to find alternative options.

There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals service and it is highly subsidised. The proposal seeks approval from Cabinet to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change proposal of option 3.

The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend, delivered on a Friday, as part of the regular daily delivery service. Meals are prepared on site at one central kitchen in Ynyshir by a variety of kitchen staff. 2 Members of staff in each of the 14 vans deliver the meals.

The proposal would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which they could order through a central point of contact within the Council. The frozen meals would be purchased by the Council through a third-party supplier and stored at the central meal kitchen. Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, half the number of delivery drivers. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support clients with plating a meal if required

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

There is no statutory requirement to provide a Community Meals Service.

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.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Age</b> ( <i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i> )	Negative	<p>The proposal would have a negative impact on older people, who may be more likely to be unable to prepare a meal for themselves and rely on the Community Meals Service to provide assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition and well-being.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to support this group of people. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal may impact on some older people, as the majority of service users are over 70 years of age.</p> <p>Also, if service users are unable to afford the service, and withdraw, this could impact on other areas of the Council such as Adult Social Care.</p>	The age profile of current service users is detailed in Table 2 of the Cabinet report and illustrates that the service, in the main, supports the older generation with 86% of clients aged over 70 years.

<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>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.</p> <p>Community Meals Staff:</p> <p>The age profile of staff ranges from 35 to 65.</p> <p>To mitigate any compulsory redundancies, opportunities for redeployment will be available (in particular, in our school kitchens to assist with the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals) and utilising the Council's Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme for eligible staff, as part of on-going workfore planning arrangements.</p>	Staffing profile from iTrent.
<b>Disability</b>	Negative	The proposal would have a negative impact on service users with a disability / long-term health condition,	Our service records indicate that a proportion of service users have some significant

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i>		<p>who may be more likely to be unable to prepare a meal for themselves and rely on the Community Meals Service to provide assistance to manage and maintain their own nutrition and well-being.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to support this group of people. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal may impact on some service users who have either a physical or mental disability.</p> <p>Also, if service users are unable to afford the service, and withdraw, this could impact on other areas of the Council such as Adult Social Care.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales</p>	<p>needs, with 11% experiencing mobility issues and 11% displaying significant confusion. A further 3% of clients display both mobility issues and memory loss.</p>

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.  It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on staff.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Race</b> <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.  The Service is able to offer culturally appropriate food choices, however, requests for meal choices such as kosher and halal are limited. Vegetarian and vegan meal options are readily available.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.

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

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Armed Forces Community</b> <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Neutral	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.	It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic.
<b>Carers</b> <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Neutral	The proposal would have a neutral impact on carers, who may take responsibility for providing care for family members / friends / neighbours, as the Council is continuing to provide a delivered meal service to service users. However, a proposed increase in the cost of a meal could impact on carers, if the service user can no longer afford this service, which could put additional pressures on carers. To mitigate this impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

		disability benefits. Carers will also be entitled to their own assessment, which will help to mitigate against indirect hardship caused by any future decisions.	
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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:

N/A

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?                      Yes                       No

Name: Andrea Richards

Position: Service Director for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 21/11/22

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:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- 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

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Low Income/<u>Income Poverty</u></b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
<b>Low and / or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
<b><u>Material Deprivation</u></b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in meal price and who are unable to afford to heat or	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<i>electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>		prepare meals.To mitigate this impact, as part of the consultation process, service users will be assessed to ensure that there is adequate means of safely storing meals, in terms of appropriate white goods, and appropriate means of heating and preparing meals if required. The Council will also continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b><u>Area Deprivation</u></b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
<b>Socio-economic background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.
<b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their</i>	Negative	The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on service users that may be unable to afford the proposed increase in the meal price. To mitigate the impact the Council	Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.

<i>protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>		will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits.	
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## 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.**

The proposal has a negative impact on eight disadvantaged groups highlighted in section 3, which includes age, disability, those on Low Income / Income Poverty, Low and / or No Wealth, Material Deprivation, Area Deprivation, Socio-economic Background and Socio-Economic Disadvantage. A detailed action plan to reduce/mitigate these impacts will be collated during and following the consultation process.

To minimise the impact of a price increase on these groups, the Council will reorganise the Service and continue to provide a subsidisation, which will keep the price of the meal as low as possible at £4.55, whilst taking into account inflationary price increases. This still demonstrates good value for money when compared to prices charged by other Local Authorities for a similar service or the price an external provider would charge for a frozen delivery meal service only. The Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. The Chancellor, in his Autumn Statement on 17.11.22, announced some measures, which will assist households facing financial challenges, such as additional cost of living payments in 2023/24 of £900 to households on means tested benefits; £300 to pensioner households and £150 to individuals on disability benefit. Also, in April 2023, the state pension will increase in line with inflation, which equates to a £870 increase. Benefits will also rise in line with inflation.

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

To be updated when redeployment opportunities have been identified and expressions of interest for Enhanced Voluntary Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy Scheme received.

- 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.

Community Meals Service records and Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

- 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.

To be actioned following Cabinet's approval to consult on the service proposal.

- 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 AND REVIEW**

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

Following the consultation, the impact assessment will be updated and Cabinet will receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation.

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

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision .

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

Director of Education & Inclusion Services

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

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision.

## SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to [Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqlA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>

## **SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

There is no statutory requirement for the Council to provide a Community Meals service and it is highly subsidised. The proposal seeks approval from Cabinet to initiate a consultation on the preferred service change proposal of option 3.

The current service provides a prime cooked hot meal and dessert, five days a week, with an option of a frozen meal for the weekend. The proposal would consist of providing service users with a choice of either a hot or frozen meal delivery service, which they could order through a central point of contact within the Council. Part of this option would also entail a proposed price increase of £0.50 to service users, which would increase the price of the meal from £4.05 to £4.55. The meals would be regenerated on-site with a reduced number of staff and hours in the kitchen, and a reduction in the number of delivery drivers. Community Meals staff will continue to offer a welfare check to service users and support clients with plating a meal if required.

There are 8 negative and 9 neutral equality and diversity implications associated with this report. These risks will be mitigated by a range of actions as detailed in the impact assessment, which will be updated following the consultation process.

## **SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS**

Lead Officer:

Name: Andrea Richards

Position: Service Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 21.11.22

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:

Name: Gaynor Davies

Position: Director of Education & Inclusion Services

Date: 21.11.22

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