

# Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment (FEIA)

Version 1 –26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

The purpose of this assessment is to provide balanced information to support decision making and to promote better ways of working in line with equalities (Equalities Act 2010), Welsh language promotion (The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), sustainable development (Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and the four parameters of debate about fairness identified by the Newport Fairness Commission (NFC Full Report to Council 2013).

**Completed by:** Karyn Keane      **Role:** Assistant Head of Education

**Head of Service:** Sarah Morgan      **Date:** 26/10/2020

**I confirm that the above Head of Service has agreed the content of this assessment**

Yes

**When you complete this FEIA, it is your responsibility to submit it to**  
impact.assessment@newport.gov.uk

## **1. Name and description of the policy / proposal being assessed. Outline the policy's purpose.**

This proposal sets out the intention to revise the staffing structure of the Education Welfare Service to achieve savings for realisation in the 2021/22 financial year. This involves reducing the number of weeks worked by the full time, permanent EWO to 41 weeks a year. All other permanent EWOs posts are already contracted to work either 39 weeks a year or 41 weeks per year.

EWOs play a pivotal part in ensuring that the culture of poor attendance is avoided within families. EWOs support schools with attendance issues and make home visits, providing welfare checks to pupils with poor rates of attendance and those who are home educated. EWOs work with families extends beyond the school day and their support continues during school holiday periods.

To provide schools and young people with some EWO access during the school holiday periods, a planned approach to holiday cover rota will be implemented. This will help provide access to a duty EWO for a maximum of 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks.

## **2. Outline how you have/ will involve stakeholders who will be affected by the policy/proposal**

Formal consultation will take place as part of the Council's budget setting process for 2021/22.

This proposal will be subject to standard consultation processes as part of the Council's budget setting arrangements for 2021/22 before a decision is taken by Cabinet as to whether or not to proceed with the proposal. All stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in the consultation.

**3. What information/evidence do you have on stakeholders? e.g. views, needs, service usage etc. Please include all the evidence you consider relevant.**

There are 57 schools in Newport, each having a responsibility to work with pupils and families to maximise attendance to schools. Work to improve attendance is monitored by the local authority and the school's inspection body, Estyn. Each school will have access to a named Education Welfare Officer whose work supports them to improve rates of pupil attendance. To ensure that schools can still access support during the school holidays, the Education Welfare Officer who is on duty will work across all schools during this period.

Stakeholders will include:

- all staff within the Education Welfare Service;
- other staff across the wider Central Education Service;
- Headteachers, Governing Bodies and those school staff with specific responsibility for attendance and safeguarding;
- young people and families supported by the Education Welfare Service;
- wider partners who are impacted by the work undertaken by the Education Welfare Service.

**4. Equalities and Welsh language impact**





Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
<b>Age</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Autumn 2020 Pupil Census indicates that there are 26,747 pupils being educated in Newport. In terms of education welfare, this proposal will impact on these children and young people as they are the primary clients of the Education Welfare Service. There is likely to be a greater impact on pupils over 11 years of age as rates of attendance are lower in the secondary sector than in the primary sector. During term time, each school has access to a named Education Welfare Officer who provides pupils and families with support. During holiday periods, a duty EWO will be available for around 6 of the 13 holiday weeks. This will allow schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.</p> <p>With regard to affected staff, 86% of Education Welfare Service employees are over 50 years old. All affected staff will be treated equally regardless of their age.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This proposal will impact on disabled children and young people as this group faces barriers related to learning or health that may affect their attendance at school. These</p>


Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
				<p>pupils attend mainstream schools across the city or may also be one of the 227 pupils that attend one of the 2 special schools located in Newport (October 2020 PLASC data).</p> <p>To ensure disabled children and young people are not disadvantaged by the decision to reduce the number of Education Welfare Officers who work during the school holiday periods, the local authority will identify a duty EWO who will be available for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This will allow schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff who share this protected characteristic.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment/transgender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff or pupils who share this protected characteristic
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff or pupils who share this protected characteristic
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff or pupils who share this protected characteristic. Any affected staff member will be treated in line with current redundancy and maternity/paternity and other relevant HR policies
<b>Race</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Autumn 2020 Pupil Census indicates that there are 7204 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pupils in school in Newport. These pupils may be disproportionately affected by this proposal, as attendance rates of black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils are often lower than that of other learners. Pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families may be disproportionately affected as they often have lower rates of attendance and higher rates of persistence absence than other groups of pupils.</p> <p>The Education Welfare Services provides support to BAME and GRT families in order to promote attendance. This proposal will affect families who require support, who will have a reduced provision from the Education Welfare Service.</p>

Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
				<p>To ensure children and young people from black and minority ethnic and Gypsy, Roma Traveller groups are not disadvantaged by the decision to reduce the number of Education Welfare Officers who work during the school holiday periods, the local authority will identify a duty EWO who will be available for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This will allow schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff or pupils who share this protected characteristic</p>
<b>Religion or Belief or non-belief</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest that this proposal will have an impact on staff or pupils who share this protected characteristics
<b>Sex/ Gender Identity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Both male and female pupils will be equally affected by this proposal.</p> <p>To ensure male and female children and young people are not disadvantaged by the decision to reduce the number of Education Welfare Officers who work during the school holiday periods, the local authority will identify a duty EWO who will be available for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This will allow schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.</p> <p>Overall, seven members of staff will be affected by these proposals, the majority of whom are female. The proposed cuts would therefore have an adverse impact on the female workforce.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research suggests that LGBT pupils encounter levels of bullying and discrimination in schools that impact negatively on their school experience leading to poorer attendance and slower academic progress. To ensure LGBT pupils are not disadvantaged by the decision to reduce the number of Education Welfare Officers who work during the school holiday periods, the local authority will identify a duty EWO who will be available for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This will allow schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.

Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Of the 57 schools in Newport, 4 are Welsh medium with 1 of these being a secondary school and 3 being primary schools. The Autumn 2020 School census records 1241 pupil as attending these schools. These schools, their pupils, staff and families will be affected by any reduction in Education Welfare Service staffing as the majority of pupils attending Welsh medium schools live outside of school locality.</p> <p>To ensure children and young people Welsh medium schools are not disadvantaged by the decision to reduce the number of Education Welfare Officers who work during the school holiday periods, the local authority will identify a duty EWO who will be available for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks. This will allow Welsh medium schools, pupils and their families to access some support during this period.</p> <p>Employee surveys highlight that most of potentially affected employees state they have no or little Welsh language skills.</p>

## How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The Council must achieve a balanced budget and maintain the best service for its customers. Customers are wider than those in schools alone. This budget proposal prevents a further, disproportionate funding reduction to wider Council services.</p> <p>There are no other options available within Education Welfare Service other than to make savings linked to staff reductions. Without the Education Welfare Service making a significant saving, there will be exacerbated pressure on other frontline services across the city. The Education Welfare Service is at a point where any reduction in officer time will significantly impact on deliverable outcomes of the service area. With this in mind consideration has been given to changes which will have the least impact overall.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>This proposal requires more support and independence from school based staff. This would need the agreement of all schools and Headteachers.</p>
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>All budget proposals will be consulted upon. Key stakeholders linked to this proposal include Chairs of Governors, Head teachers, Trade Unions, parents, pupils, Schools Forum and Newport City Council staff. Approaches to improving attendance can be co-produced by schools, pupils and the Education Welfare Service.</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The Council must achieve a balanced budget and maintain the best service for its customers. Customers are wider than those in schools alone. This budget proposal prevents a further, disproportionate funding reduction to wider Council services.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> Maintaining an Education Welfare Service, albeit on reduced contracted hours of working, continues to support children and young people to attend school, which in turn will support their progress into employment, education, or training on leaving school.</p> <p><b>A resilient Wales</b> This proposal demonstrates the flexibility of the Education Welfare Service in developing changes in ways of working based on need, context and environment. A named Education Welfare Officer will be allocated to every school during term time with a duty Education Welfare Officer available for around 6 of the school holiday weeks.</p> <p><b>A healthier Wales</b> By working with schools to maximise attendance, learner wellbeing, physical, emotional and social, is also supported. This in turn will lead to improved examination outcomes and life chances.</p> <p><b>A more equal Wales</b> This proposal supports the local authority's work to improve educational attainment by ensuring some school holiday support is available from Education Welfare Officers to support pupils who are disadvantaged by poverty..</p> <p><b>A Wales of more cohesive communities</b> This proposal aims to mitigate against the long-term impacts of potential educational disparity, by enabling learners to access the support of a designated Education Welfare Officer.</p> <p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture an thriving Welsh Language</b> This proposal will have a positive impact on ensuring that pupils are supported to attend schools and continue to access opportunities to develop the Welsh language.</p> <p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> By responding to the need to develop new and more effective working practices that involve less travel and more agile approaches, the Education Welfare Service is contributing to the work of the modernised council.</p>

**5 What will the impact be on the wellbeing goals (under Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015)?**

The proposal will likely have a negative impact on services for promoting school attendance. Low attendance has been demonstrated to align with poorer academic outcomes and therefore, reduced employment opportunities. School attendance is a key performance indicator for the Local Authority.

## **6 Will the proposal/policy have a disproportionate impact on a specific geographical area of Newport?**

In terms of the Education Welfare Service, rates of school attendance are typically lower in more deprived parts of Newport. A reduction in the scope and resource of the Education Welfare Service will have a disproportionate impact on these areas.

## **7 How does the proposal/policy relate to the parameters of debate about Fairness identified by the Newport Fairness Commission**

The budget process considers where the Council's reducing financial resources should be spent. These services affect children that are vulnerable. The proposal should be seen collectively alongside other proposals.

## **8 Taking this assessment as a whole, what could be done to mitigate any negative impacts of your policy and better contribute to positive impacts?**

The reduction in the contracted hours of working for the Education Welfare Service is likely to have an impact on the local authority's rate of primary and secondary attendance and the increased rate of persistent absence of pupils. Both measures are linked. EWOs play a pivotal part in ensuring that the culture of poor attendance is avoided within families. EWOs support schools with attendance issues and attend home visits, providing welfare checks to pupils with poor rates of attendance or those that are home tutored. In light of this budget saving proposal, the Education Welfare Service would continue to provide a named officer to work with schools during term time whilst making a duty officer available to support all schools for around 6 of the 13 school holiday weeks.

## **9 Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing**

School attendance is monitored monthly and reported to Welsh Government and Council Scrutiny annually. School attendance rates are a key performance indicator for the Local Authority.

The monitoring of the children most affected by this proposal will be ongoing by schools and by the Education Welfare Service

## **10 Involvement**

This proposal is being made as part of the Council's 2021/22 budget process which will include consultation and engagement with relevant key stakeholders.

## **11 Summary of Impact (for inclusion in any report)**

**Equality Act 2010 AND Welsh Language**



The proposal will have an impact on services for Children and Young People. The impact will negatively affect children and young people in vulnerable groups as there will be a significant reduction in the support provided to families. This may result in an additional number of pupils reporting as school phobic / refusers as well as potentially increasing the number of pupil exclusions. The proposal will have an impact on services for Children and Young People as there will be reduced capacity for direct services for children and young people.