

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Title: Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People – Green Paper		WLIA Reference No (completed by WLU):			
Name of person completing form: Laura Hughes					
Date: March 2018					
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Programme/Project Type					
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy		<input type="checkbox"/> Project or programme			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislation		<input type="checkbox"/> Research, evaluation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant		<input type="checkbox"/> Services			
<input type="checkbox"/> Business change		<input type="checkbox"/> Contracts, tenders			
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure					
<input type="checkbox"/> Construction, Capital					
<input type="checkbox"/> ICT					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify below)					
[Empty box for specifying other details]					
Costs: How much is the projected whole life cost for the programme/project? If below £25k, then a full WLIA is not always required (see guidance).					
Under £25k	£25k - £49k	£50 - £249K	£250K - £1m	Over £1m	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Of the above, please provide details if there are any identified costs directly associated with the Welsh language?					
[Empty box for providing details]					
How long is the programme/project expected to run?					
Up to 1 yr	Up to 2yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 10yrs	More than 10 yrs	Unknown
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Key milestone dates for the programme/ project:					
<p>This Welsh Language Impact Assessment is being prepared to consider the impacts relating to proposals for the reform of local government in Wales as set out in Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People (“the Green Paper”).</p> <p>The proposed creation of new, stronger local authorities forms part of a wider programme, which sets out the Welsh Government’s vision for the future of local government. We want and need more resilient and sustainable local authorities, empowered to support communities through efficient and effective use of public money. The changes in the demography in Wales combined with ongoing fiscal uncertainty are placing significant pressures on our local authorities and the services that they provide. These pressures are not new, but they have become more acute and will continue for the foreseeable future. There is an urgent need for radical change which can help bring about the transformation of our services and deliver the strong and capable local government we need to drive prosperity for all. The Welsh Government is proposing a wide range of fundamental reforms in local government that will be delivered in partnership with local government and the people of Wales. The proposals have been consulted upon extensively and widely since July 2014, including three previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments.</p> <p>This Impact Assessment considers the impacts in the round of the reform programme, not only the proposals to create stronger, empowered local authorities. It is intended that a Bill will be introduced into the National Assembly for Wales later this year and a further Welsh Language Impact Assessment will be published at that point. The Welsh Government consulted separately on proposals for electoral reform in 2017 and a statement on the way forward was published on 30 January. Those proposals will be reflected in the Impact Assessment published alongside the Bill on introduction.</p> <p>Following these reforms, a review of the local government funding system is being considered which would lead to further separate legislation. Local government finance is, therefore, not included in this Impact Assessment.</p>					
STAGE 1: PLANNING					
What are the aims and objectives of the policy?					
What are the desired outcomes/ what constitutes ‘success’?					
<p>It is important that local government closely represents the communities it serves, and preparation work undertaken in connection with the development of the Bill has found that there is a diversity deficit in local government. The body of elected members does not always reflect the communities they represent, particularly in relation to age, gender and ethnicity. This is similar for senior officers in local</p>					

government. Moreover, the culture and working practices within local authorities are not always conducive to encouraging diversity.

The reforms propose the following principles, the achievement of which would constitute 'success':

- **Elected members:** Bold and Ambitious, Shaping and Influencing, Relevant and Representative
- **Stronger Local Government:** Evolving and Innovating, Valued by Communities, Open and Transparent
- **Communities:** Empowered and Engaged, Prosperous and Successful, Represented and Serve
- **Public Sector Workforce:** Valued and Respected, Supported and Encouraged, Leading and Creative.

The reforms are not specific to Welsh speakers, Welsh-speaking communities, or the Welsh language but the aim is to benefit all communities in Wales.

In considering the approach to creating fewer larger local authorities, the Green Paper presents a number of options for discussion.: In each of these options the Green Paper outlines the need for a clear future footprint for local government and proposes an indicative footprint for discussion. The impacts outlined within this Impact Assessment will also vary dependant on each of the options within the Green Paper.

- Option 1 - Voluntary mergers
- Option 2 - A phased approach with early adopters merging first followed by other authorities
- Option 3 - A single comprehensive merger programme

The outcome of the consultation in the Green Paper will inform proposals for creating fewer, larger local authorities to be included in the Bill.

A summary of the wider elements of the Local Government (Wales) Bill proposals not included in the Green Paper proposals is set out below.

Constitutional reforms – governance, openness, transparency, engagement

- Merging local authorities would be provided with a general power of competence, to allow them to become more innovative in their service delivery.
- Measures would be put in place to improve the diversity of elected members, so they mirror more closely the communities they serve and ensure that they are able to effectively undertake their role as representatives of both the electorate and the local authority.
- New arrangements would be put in place to make council meetings more accessible and open.
- A range of measures would be put in place to enable more public participation

and the openness of local authorities.

Governance and Performance

- Local authorities would be required to undertake a robust self assessment process, supported by regular peer reviews.
- The role of newly-styled Corporate Governance and Audit Committees would be strengthened.
- The process by which the Welsh Ministers can provide support and/or intervention to local authorities would be simplified and strengthened.
- Technical changes to finance would be introduced.

Community and Town Councils

- Some community councils that satisfy eligibility criteria would be able to exercise the general power of competence.
- Requirements relating to the preparation of training plans would be introduced.
- Community councils would also need to make their council meetings more accessible and open.

What policy options have been considered?

and

What impacts will there be if the policy is *not* implemented?

This Green Paper has been informed by extensive engagement and consultation with a range of stakeholders and the public since July 2014. During that period four previous consultations have been conducted, one of which explored the option of systematic and mandatory regional working as an alternative to the previous Welsh Government's merger proposals.

The Green Paper presents three potential options for mergers. Any positive or negative impacts arising as a result of mergers specifically, may not be accrued by non merging authorities or deferred under option 2 for authorities that are not early adopters.

The origins of the reform programme lie in January 2014 when the Report of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery ("the Williams Commission") was clear that public services in Wales faced severe and prolonged challenges.

The Williams Commission made the case for structural reform of local authorities in order to ensure the continued delivery of high quality and sustainable public services. The Williams Commission identified that smaller council areas were significantly challenged in delivering consistently, securing the resilience, expertise and leadership capable of transforming their organisations and supporting their communities in a complex and changing world. The Commission also believed that smaller local authorities are further limited by proportionally greater administrative overheads. Continuing with 22 authorities often doing the same things in different ways 22 times over is no longer sustainable. These issues are not new, neither is the fact that funding for public services will continue to be challenging for the foreseeable future.

The Williams Commission considered policy options throughout its report and final

recommendations, which the Welsh Government broadly accepted. The Welsh Government has presented these recommendations as both legislative and non-legislative proposals, and consulted widely through four previous consultations. Responses to these consultations have generally expressed support for the proposals, and have been influential in refining the policy options. Some of the options considered, but ultimately not pursued, include:

- A range of different configurations for merging local authorities
- Term limits for elected members of local authorities
- Community area committees
- Some of the requirements which were to be met for community councils to be eligible for the general power of competence
- Combined regulator assessments
- Member recall
- Voting rights for members of overview and scrutiny committees

Although the reform programme contains no provisions specifically relating to the Welsh Language, the provisions should benefit all communities in Wales. However, through the measures included in the Electoral Reform proposals, provisions would be in place that would directly affect 16-17 year olds voting rights.

The consultation on the White Paper *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People* in 2015 included questions on the impact of the previous merger proposals on the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities. Many participants did not respond to these questions. Those that did noted effects on the Welsh language, with responses tending to either suggest that the Welsh language should not be prioritised, or, among those responding positively, that the wide proposals for more open and representative local government would benefit Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities. The Welsh Ministers also engaged in a dialogue with the Welsh Language Commissioner, whose views have been taken into account. The Commissioner highlighted the impact that different merger options could have, particularly on the use of Welsh in the workplace. The Commissioner also stressed the importance of understanding the impact of the legislation on the rights of Welsh speakers in all communities, not just those where Welsh is the main language. These issues have been taken into account whilst drafting the Green Paper and we are now inviting further responses to the possible impacts on the Welsh language as part of the consultation process.

The Welsh Government is currently considering proposals relating to the arrangements to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, and make improvements to the Welsh Language Standards system within a new Welsh Language Bill. We will continue to work closely with the Welsh Language Division to ensure that any potential changes to the current arrangements will support any new local authorities and the communities they serve.

Does the programme demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language – [Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers ?](#)

The ambition set out in Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh Speakers, is to create a Wales which responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, and increase the number of people learning and able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace.

The proposals look to set an ambitious direction for each area that influences the language and acknowledges the need for creativity if we are to reach the target of a million speakers. It also recognises the need for Government to lead the conversation but also work in partnership with many other institutions and organisations towards making the Welsh language central to public life in Wales.

There are three themes in the strategy:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers; language transmission in the family, the early years, statutory education, post compulsory education, the education workforce, resources and qualifications.
- Increasing the use of Welsh; the workplace, services, social use of Welsh.
- Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context; community and economy, culture and media, Wales and the wider world, digital technology, linguistic infrastructure, language planning, evaluation and research.

The general aims of this legislation will support local government in meeting its commitments to the Welsh language, Welsh speakers, and Welsh-speaking communities. Improving the capacity and capability of local authorities is likely to support them in delivering Welsh-medium services, particularly in light of the financial and demographic pressures outlined above. These services include Welsh-medium services for children and young people, as well as the infrastructure of delivering such services to Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities, including innovative digital options. Particular aspects of the reforms, such as a general power of competence, will support merging local authorities to become more innovative when commissioning and delivering such services.

Depending on the outcome of the consultation, larger, stronger local authorities would be more likely to provide proactive support and systematise the use of Welsh in their own workplaces, as well as in the areas they serve.

Care would be taken, however, to ensure that the possible creation of larger areas does not erode current practice in those authorities which conduct their internal administration either entirely or largely in Welsh. Indeed, whatever the current practice across local government in Wales, the Welsh Ministers seek such practice to be strengthened and built upon.

Local authorities would be required to have a more robust set of corporate governance procedures which will assist in ensuring that their Welsh language commitments are met, including identifying how an authority could best meet its obligations regarding the Welsh language. This would be required to be considered as part of the self-assessment and peer review processes. Local authority Corporate Governance and Audit Committees are also to be afforded an expanded role to provide scrutiny and assurance on these matters.

The reforms are also likely to support the position of the Welsh language in communities: not just through improving Welsh-medium services, but through its proposals to ensure local government better reflects the communities it serves. A local government closer to communities – through more diverse elected members and more open and transparent processes – is likely to strengthen the ability of Welsh speakers and Welsh communities to influence decisions which affect them.

As major employers, local authorities play an important part in the economies of the areas in which their headquarters and other offices are located. In Welsh-speaking areas of Wales, the existence of such places of work provide an important piece of the jigsaw in the local economy which provides opportunities for the local Welsh-speaking population to remain in, or return to, their local areas – something which is vitally important for the future sustainability of the language in those communities. As such, we will expect decisions regarding the management of the estates of the merged authorities to take full account of the potential impacts on the Welsh language.

In line with the principle of subsidiarity, the full effects of these reforms are likely to be realised through decisions taken by local authorities. The impacts of these decisions will be appraised at a local level in due course.

What are the impacts/ effects (both positive and/or adverse) on the Welsh language you have identified at the initial planning stage

i.e. Welsh speakers, Welsh language communities, Welsh medium education, Welsh learners, services available in Welsh?

The Welsh language, Welsh-speaking communities and Welsh speakers in communities where Welsh is not the main language can benefit from the general aims of the proposed Bill. The proposed reforms seek to ensure local authorities are more capable, more inclusive, more accountable, and share more power and responsibility with communities. In this context, ‘communities’ means communities of interest as well as communities of place, and so encompasses Welsh speakers in all parts of Wales, not just those communities where the Welsh language is predominant. This should ensure local authorities can better serve and represent those who speak Welsh and better provide services, facilities, and education in the Welsh language. The proposals should also support local authorities to support culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and to meet their requirements under the Welsh Language Standards to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language, including in the workplace.

However, certain proposals are also likely to have some particular impacts on Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities. These are summarised below.

1. Creating New Local Authorities

The Green Paper proposes a number of approaches which could be adopted to create fewer, larger authorities. As we identify above any positive or negative impacts

arising as a result of mergers specifically, may not be accrued by non-merging authorities or deferred under option 2 for authorities that are not early adopters.

Some stakeholders have expressed concerns about the effects of putting existing local authority areas together to create larger council areas on the Welsh Language. New authorities would remain subject to the Welsh Language Standards set out in compliance notices issued under regulations of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. It needs to be recognised that local authorities may be at different stages in terms of their current practice and aspirations in relation to the use of the Welsh language in service provision, policy making, operations, promotion of the language and record keeping. The Welsh Ministers are clear there should be no loss of progress during the process of creating new authorities, for example, in relation to bilingual working. Where good practice already exists, it should be protected within the enlarged local authorities and every opportunity should be taken for the new authorities to be more ambitious and aspirational. We would take every opportunity to engage with any new authorities at the earliest possible stage to ensure that full consideration of issues relating to the Welsh language are taken into account during the transition phase.

The Welsh Government has consulted on proposed reforms to the system of Standards in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This includes a proposal to make the Welsh Ministers responsible for imposing standards on bodies, which is currently a function of the Welsh Language Commissioner. It will be necessary to issue new compliance notices for the new local authorities (which would otherwise be operating under two or more different compliance notices) but it is too early to set out detailed proposals for how this is to be undertaken.

Transition committees for merging authorities would be set up as soon as possible after introduction of the Bill to begin preparations for the effective creation of the new authorities, before shadow authorities come into effect. Transition committees would have an important role to play in influencing the working practices and policies of the future local authorities. As committees of the existing authorities, they would be subject to Welsh Language Standards, and their decisions would be appraised at a local level.

However, within these proposals there are a number of areas where, if accepted, they would improve provisions for all such as the alignment of any new local authority areas with the current health board boundaries, except in the case of Bridgend. Our proposal is consistent with the proposition which is being consulted on and is underpinned by the same principles for simpler, more effective public services that are better aligned to existing regional partnerships.

While all local authorities will remain subject to the Welsh Language Standards, there have been particular considerations of Welsh as the language of administration in several authorities. In West Wales for example, where Welsh is more thoroughly embedded as a language of business, the Welsh Ministers are of the opinion that this presents an opportunity for good practice to spread to a larger area of business across the new local authority.

In North Wales, Gwynedd currently uses Welsh as its primary language of business

and Anglesey has recently announced its intention to adopt this policy. Creating larger authorities that would encompass this best practice in relation to the language could therefore, further promote and support North West Wales as a hub for the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Overall, the Welsh Ministers believe that strengthening the capacity and capability of local authorities should support their ability to work bilingually, and to enable staff who wish, to work through the medium of Welsh. Creating new, stronger, empowered local authorities presents an opportunity to share and strengthen best practice, which would be realised according to decisions taken locally.

2. Elected Members

The future of local democracy is dependent on local councillors having a meaningful role, this being understood and valued by the public and attracting diverse people with the skills and enthusiasm to build trust and confidence. We have made some inroads in improving diversity but there is more to be done.

The pressures on elected members, combined with the level of remuneration, make the role inaccessible for many people who would make excellent councillors. This includes young people who speak Welsh. They cannot afford either in financial or personal terms to make the commitment needed on a 'part-time' basis. The Welsh Government believes we should recognise the commitment being a councillor involves and ensure they are properly remunerated, respected and recognised for the work they do in their communities. This will mean paying councillors at a level which recognises their commitment and hard work.

For a variety of reasons there is wide variation both between and within councils in respect of councillor to elector ratios. Our proposals present the opportunity to address this and provide for greater equality across Wales in terms of representation and effective and convenient local government.

It is appropriate for any new local authorities to determine themselves how to deliver their services and structure their workforces. As such, no changes to services are proposed directly by the Green Paper, although it is considered that creating larger authorities would increase the range of opportunities available to them in terms of service delivery. As part of the preparation for the new authorities, transition committees and shadow authorities would be expected to plan service delivery and identify best practice across the existing local authorities which being brought together. Any impacts on Welsh speakers and Welsh speaking communities of future decisions – including through service level changes – would be appraised at a local level as decisions are taken.

3. Governance and improvement

There are a number of measures to ensure that the corporate governance of all local authorities is consistently robust. This includes the introduction of a new approach to performance management based on self-assessment and peer review across a range of criteria relating to the arrangements an authority has in place for its management and accountability. This would include an assessment of how well it is meeting the

requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. This would encourage local authorities to incorporate the Welsh language into their everyday business and to implement their strategies to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language (in line with the Promotion Standards), and may be particularly beneficial in areas where Welsh is not the main language.

4. Openness, engagement, and transparency

The reforms seek to ensure local democracy is stronger, more open, and more participative. This is likely to improve engagement with Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities, increasing the likelihood their needs are met effectively.

Local authorities will be subject to the Welsh Language Standards in exercising this function. It would, therefore, give Welsh speakers a greater opportunity to make representations about decisions which might affect the Welsh language, either positively or negatively. In addition, local authorities would be asked to broadcast council meetings, allowing Welsh-language communities, often in rural areas, to understand how decisions affecting them are taken.

5. General Power of Competence

A general power of competence would be extended to all merging local authorities and would be available to community councils which meet certain eligibility criteria.

Within certain constraints, the general power of competence releases local authorities from the need to identify a specific power to do things in legislation. It enables them to do anything an individual generally may do. The power has been used by local authorities in England, for example, to run mortgage indemnity schemes to support first time house buyers, in partnership with private lending bodies and housing associations. The general power could be used by local authorities to take action to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language, directly or indirectly, in ways they may not be currently authorised to do, but it will be for individual authorities to determine how they wish to exercise the power. In the case of community councils, their legal basis for taking action is currently very limited. The general power would give those community councils that are eligible to use the general power of competence (see below) extensive freedom to act in new ways in response to the cares and concerns of their communities.

Where the general power is used to develop alternative delivery models on behalf of a local authority, for example involving co-operatives, mutuals or other partners, it is worth noting that the delegated function continues to be a function of the council and so subject to the Welsh Language Standards. For example, it is a local authority's responsibility to ensure service users are able to access services (to which the Welsh Language Standards apply) in Welsh where the service is delivered by another body on their behalf.

6. Community and Town Councils

Community councils are an integral part of local government. They are often closest to people and local communities, and therefore uniquely placed to see, and provide,

services which can have a significant impact on people's lives. Like elected members within local authorities, community councillors must represent, and be representative of, their communities. It is proposed that some community councils that satisfy eligibility criteria would be able to exercise the general power of competence as well as introducing requirements relating to the preparation of training plans and making their council meetings more accessible and open. As noted in the case of local authority councillors, community and town councillors are also faced with financial and personal pressures that can make the role inaccessible for many people who would make excellent councillors. There is at present a lack of diversity across the board amongst elected members. Recognising the commitment and valuing the contribution of community and town councillors will lead to an increased interest in the role by a wider group of people which will in turn, increase the number of young Welsh speakers who take up the role of a councillor.

An independent, cross party, review is underway to identify how community councils can be strengthened so they are best able to support their communities and care for their areas, shaping everyday lives.

The review is exploring the potential role community councils can play, drawing on best practice; advising on the most appropriate model(s) or structure(s) to deliver this role; and considering how these models and structures should be applied across Wales. The review panel will be providing their emerging findings in July 2018, and submitting their final report by October 2018.

Who are the stakeholders? Are the needs of Welsh speakers and learners addressed? To what extent are Welsh language interest groups likely to respond positively to the proposals?

All Welsh speakers and learners are stakeholders, wherever they live or work in Wales. Other stakeholders directly affected include local authorities, community councils, elected members, and senior officers.

Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities have been involved throughout the development of the proposals. All of our previous consultations received responses from a wide range of organisations and many members of the public, many of which were in Welsh. We have previously asked specific questions on the proposals' impacts on the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities. A number of events were held across Wales which provided opportunities for views to be put forward including on the impact of the proposals on the Welsh language. The Welsh Ministers have also engaged in previous discussions with the Welsh Language Commissioner and further dialogue will be conducted as part of the consultation on this Green Paper.

In response to previous concerns raised, the Welsh Government established a Working Group on the Welsh Language and Local Government. In particular, the Group considered the potential impact of mergers on the use of Welsh language as the internal language of administration in local government. The Group also considered the role of local government as the facilitator of economic development to

support the Welsh language. The Group reported in the summer of 2016 and the Welsh Government responded in October 2016. Although the majority of the recommendations were accepted, some recommendations relating to a statutory level of proficiency in Welsh for certain posts within local government were rejected. It was noted:

“The Welsh Government agrees that there is a need for leadership on the Welsh language from those who lead our public services. On balance, however, we concluded that Recommendation 2(a) [and 3] is impractical and that it would not be wise to break the principle that there is a direct link between the requirements for Welsh language skills and the requirements of the post.”

Some of the recommendations presented in the report relate to duties of the Welsh Language Commissioner and other partners but others that were accepted and have/are being implemented through the Welsh Government’s *Cymraeg 2050* Strategy and other policies include;

- Development of new Welsh Language Strategy to include revision of Welsh Language Measure 2011
- The Welsh Government should establish a Language Technology Board and a language technology fund to provide leadership in this area.
- The Welsh Government should place a statutory duty on local government to promote local economic development, and ensure consideration of the growth and prosperity of the Welsh language as part of that duty.
- The Welsh Government, in a full and equal partnership with local government, should develop and implement a linguistic-economic strategy for the counties of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and adjacent and relevant areas, based on the towns of Bangor, Aberystwyth, Carmarthen and Llanelli.
- The Welsh Government should monitor the development of the Swansea Bay City region to ensure that the prosperity of the Welsh language in east Carmarthenshire (including Llanelli and the Gwendraeth and Amman Valleys) is a specific priority.
- The Welsh Government should include a section on the trends for the geographical distribution of Welsh speakers over the next 25 years in its first report on likely future trends under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Further projects are being implemented by partners such as the National Centre for Learning Welsh, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and Welsh Universities.

The Welsh Government is currently considering proposals relating to the arrangements to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, and make improvements to the Welsh Language Standards system within a new Welsh Language Bill. We will continue to ensure that both proposed Bills are aligned to support any new local authorities and the communities they serve.

Contributions in respect of the potential impact on the Welsh language will again be welcomed and encouraged during this Green Paper consultation. As previously noted, we will of course be conducting regular discussions with each local authority and WLGA and relevant stakeholders.

Where an assessment was not completed, or no impacts were identified, please provide a full account for record keeping purposes?
(This could be used in the Welsh Language Tribunal in future)

N/A

What actions/ further work has been identified at the initial planning stage?
e.g. data requirements, need for peer review, external engagement with Welsh speaking groups, identify stakeholders or consultation list, need to contact Welsh Language Unit for advice)?

N/A

Following this consultation, a further Welsh Language Impact Assessment will be published as the Local Government (Wales) Bill is introduced to the National Assembly.

STAGE 2: IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING IMPACTS

Impact Assessment Summary

Summarise the detailed impact assessment carried out together with the scores assigned.

Positive effects/ impacts:

1. Creating New Local Authorities

The Green Paper proposes approaches to creating stronger, empowered local authorities with more capability and capacity. The new local authorities will remain subject to the Welsh Language Standards, and this presents an opportunity for best practice to be strengthened and shared among authorities. Larger, more resilient authorities are likely to be in a better position to effectively fulfil their commitments to the Welsh Language, particularly in light of the demographic and financial challenges they face.

IMPACT SCORE 12 (Impact: 3, Probability: 4)

2. Diversity of Elected Members

There are a range of measures to improve the diversity of elected members, so they more closely represent the communities they serve. This could improve the representation of Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities, with positive impacts on the decisions taken relating to the Welsh language.

IMPACT SCORE 6 (Impact: 3, Probability: 2)

3. Corporate governance, performance, and improvement

There are a range of measures to improve the corporate governance and performance of local authorities, enabling them to better implement their strategies to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language. It is considered that the new local authorities with shared capability are more likely to be able to realise opportunities to improve their fulfilment of Welsh language commitments, of particular benefit in areas

where Welsh is not the main language.

IMPACT SCORE 9 (Impact: 3, Probability: 3)

4. Openness, engagement, and transparency

The reforms seek to ensure local democracy is stronger, more open, and more participative. It proposes the introduction of measures to ensure greater openness and transparency which it is considered would bring local government closer to Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities, so that decisions would more likely be taken in their interests. Communities would benefit from being more directly and closely involved in decision-making and service-delivery.

IMPACT SCORE 16 (Impact: 4, Probability: 4)

5. General Power of Competence

Providing a general power of competence to all merging local authorities and to some community councils would enable innovation in service delivery. This would provide a greater range of options to take action to promote or facilitate use of the Welsh language. Where the general power is used to develop alternative delivery models on behalf of a local authority, the Welsh Language Standards continue to apply to that function.

IMPACT SCORE 6 (Impact: 2, Probability: 3)

Adverse effects/ impacts:

The Welsh Ministers recognise that it is important to take care to ensure that merging of local authorities does not erode current practice in those authorities which conduct their internal administration either entirely or largely in Welsh. It is important that current practice across local government is strengthened and built upon.

Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life, Welsh at work increased?

All the effects identified above give opportunities to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language.

Evidence/ data used including demographic profile when considering the effects/ impacts:

No further analysis has been undertaken at this stage.

A further Welsh Language Impact Assessment will be published when the Local Government (Wales) Bill is introduced to the National Assembly.

What is the overall anticipated likely impact on the Welsh language if this policy is taken forward based on the impact assessment/ risk assessment?

Positive:
 Adverse:
 Neutral:
 Unknown:

Decision following IA

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. No major change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Adjust the policy to improve impacts | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	3. Continue the policy with mitigation measures	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4. Stop and remove the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
If answered 2,3, or 4 above – then answer the following:		
How will you address these impacts in order to improve the outcomes for the Welsh language? Details of mitigation measures/ action points/ alternative options to reduce adverse impacts and increase positive outcomes:		
If engaging or consulting, what are your plans? What questions do you wish to ask stakeholders about the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and Welsh language related issues?		
This Green Paper is published for consultation. This consultation will seek consideration of the practical impacts of our proposals to create stronger, more empowered local authorities. Stakeholders will be free to identify and highlight potential impacts of the proposals on the Welsh language, Welsh speakers, and Welsh-speaking communities. The responses will form part of the evidence used by the Welsh Ministers to refine the provisions, and inform the Local Government (Wales) Bill as it is introduced to the National Assembly.		
STAGE 3: POST CONSULTATION AND PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION		
Following consultation, what changes have you made to address any Welsh language issues that were raised?		
As outlined above, following extensive consultation over several years, a range of considerations have been raised by Welsh-language stakeholders. Welsh Ministers accept the importance of these considerations, and have carefully considered this feedback, together with discussions at stakeholder engagement events and the recommendations made by the Working Group on the Welsh Language and Local Government in 2016. This revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment seeks to address these concerns, and explain the Welsh Ministers' positions. Further views will be sought in this consultation.		
A further Welsh Language Impact Assessment will be completed to accompany the Local Government (Wales) Bill as it is introduced to the National Assembly. This will provide the opportunity to address any issues raised during this consultation, and will assess the impacts of any proposed policy changes.		
How will you monitor the ongoing effects during the implementation of the policy?		
The Welsh Ministers will continue to closely monitor the effects of the proposed reforms as they are implemented, as well as discussing issues relating to the Welsh language before the Bill is introduced with relevant stakeholders.		
Please outline how you will continue to capture effects/ impacts in future monitoring and evaluation?		
Monitoring the impacts of these provisions (depending on the outcome of the		

consultation) will potentially focus on:

- The work of transition committees in regard to the Welsh language, and Welsh-speaking communities;
- Taking the advice of relevant stakeholders and revisiting the advice provided by the former Working Group report on the Welsh Language and Local Government where relevant and;
- Monitoring local authorities' implementation of the Welsh Language Standards, both before and during the creation of the new authorities.

The results of this monitoring will be used by the Welsh Ministers, local authorities, and other stakeholders to inform their ongoing dialogue, and to improve the quality of services in Welsh.

Any other comments – ongoing results of evaluations, emerging impacts

4. Declaration

Policy lead:
*Please delete as appropriate:
The policy *does / does not have an impact upon the Welsh language. Where there were identified adverse impacts or missed opportunities, the appropriate amendments and actions have been put in place.
Name:
Stephen Phipps
Department: EPS
Local Government Democracy
Date (s):
February 2018
Signature:
Planned Review Dates: September 2018 (before publication of Local Government Wales Bill)

SRO ENDORSEMENT and REVIEW	
I am satisfied that the WLIA is an accurate reflection of the programme/project at this stage of development. By signing, I am able to confirm that the Welsh Language Standards have been given the appropriate attention. I will re-assess the programme/project at key stages throughout the life of the programme/ project, including policy reviews.	
Signed Lisa James (Senior Responsible Owner)	Date February 2018
Signed (Senior Responsible Owner)	Review Date
Signed (Senior Responsible Owner)	Review Date
Signed (Senior Responsible Owner)	Review Date