

## **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

### **Community Electoral Review Proposals**

#### **Proposal**

The Democracy and Boundary Commission undertook a review of community councils in order to ensure local democratic arrangements are fair, effective and consistent across Pembrokeshire, published January 2025. The Commission proposed several changes for a number of communities that were outside its legal powers to implement. This Community Review proposes to address this and ensure that all of Pembrokeshire communities' democratic arrangements are reviewed against the same consistent criteria. The proposals from this review only impact on eight communities and are to:

1. Reduce the number of community councillors in affected communities to achieve the target representation ratio of approximately 1 councillor per 120 electors.
2. Remove community warding arrangements in four communities and replace them with a single electoral area for the community.
3. Adopt a single official electoral community name as recommended by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

#### **Purpose of the Proposal**

The proposals seek to:

- Ensure community council representation remains proportionate to electorate size.
- Promote consistency across community council structures.
- Reflect current population and electoral patterns.
- Support the use and status of Welsh place names in line with Welsh Language Commissioner recommendations.

#### **Equality Impact Assessment**

##### **Impact on Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)**

The proposals relate to electoral governance arrangements, specifically councillor numbers, community warding arrangements and community names.

##### **Age**

No direct impact identified. Residents of all ages will continue to be represented through their community council and retain the same voting rights (if aged over 16) and opportunities to stand for election.

### **Disability**

No direct impact identified. The proposals are independent of where polling stations are located and continuing work to ensure that elections (including physical access to polling stations) remains accessible for all.

### **Gender Reassignment**

No impact identified.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

No impact identified.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

No impact identified.

### **Race and Ethnicity**

No direct impact identified. Electoral representation and participation rights remain unchanged for all residents.

### **Religion or Belief**

No impact identified.

### **Sex**

No direct impact identified. The proposals apply equally to all electors and potential candidates regardless of sex.

### **Sexual Orientation**

No impact identified.

### **Potential Indirect Impacts**

The removal of warding arrangements may give rise to concerns for less visible representation for some parts of communities. However, the current eligibility requirements to stand for election relating to someone's address is for the whole community council and its boundary, not its wards (if applicable).

### **Outcome**

No significant adverse impacts on any protected characteristic have been identified. The overall equality impact is assessed as neutral.

## **Welsh Language Impact Assessment**

### **Current Position**

The proposals include adopting a single official community name for Pen-caer in accordance with recommendations made by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

### **Positive Impacts**

- Supports the Welsh Language Commissioner's objective of promoting the consistent use of Welsh place names.
- Strengthens the visibility and status of the Welsh language in local governance.
- Provides greater consistency in official documentation, electoral arrangements and public communications.
- Contributes to local and national objectives aimed at increasing the use and normalisation of Welsh.
- Reinforces the cultural and historic identity of communities through the use of agreed Welsh names.

### **Potential Negative Impacts**

- It is worth noting, that taken as a whole, the percentage of Welsh speakers in the eight communities identified is 25.5%, higher than the equivalent county-wide figure of 17.2% based on the 2021 Census. However, it is worth noting that this is as a result of chance – the review focusses on these eight communities as, due to a technical reasons, the Commission was not able to implement its recommendations.

### **What will be done to minimise or mitigate any negative impacts identified or increase positive effects on the Welsh language?**

- Clear communication of any naming changes during consultation and implementation.
- Bilingual communication throughout the review process.
- Continued compliance with Welsh Language Standards.
- Appropriate transitional arrangements to ensure residents and stakeholders understand any changes.

### **Outcome**

Positive impact on the Welsh language.

### **Socio-economic Impact Assessment**

The proposals do not directly affect:

- Employment.

**This item is also available in Welsh / Mae'r eitem hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd**

- Income levels.
- Cost of living.
- Housing.
- Education.
- Access to public services.

The effects of the proposals are limited to democratic governance arrangements.

### **Outcome**

No significant socio-economic impact identified. Whilst community councillors are entitled to a an extra costs payment of £156 per year (2026-27) this is set at a level where the socio-economic impact of fewer councillors is not material.

### **Biodiversity and Climate Change Impact Assessment**

The proposals relate solely to electoral and governance arrangements. They do not impact on community council's existing duties around bio-diversity eg Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

There are no direct impacts on:

- Biodiversity.
- Habitat protection.
- Carbon emissions.
- Climate adaptation.
- Climate mitigation.

### **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

Contribution to the Well-being Goals

#### **A Wales of Cohesive Communities**

- Supports effective local democratic representation.
- Simplifies local governance arrangements.
- Encourages a community-wide approach to representation.

#### **A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language**

- Supports the use and recognition of Welsh community names.
- Enhances the visibility of the Welsh language within local government and democratic processes.

#### **A More Equal Wales**

**This item is also available in Welsh / Mae'r eitem hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd**

- Promotes more consistent representation ratios across communities.
- Ensures electoral arrangements remain fair and proportionate.

## **Ways of Working**

### **Long-Term**

The proposals align governance arrangements with current and projected electorate levels and support sustainable community governance structures.

### **Prevention**

The review helps prevent increasing imbalances in democratic representation across communities.

### **Integration**

The proposals support democratic participation whilst contributing to Welsh language objectives and community cohesion.

### **Collaboration**

The review has been informed by electoral data, statutory guidance and recommendations from the Welsh Language Commissioner.

### **Involvement**

Residents, community councils and other stakeholders will be invited to participate through public consultation before any final decisions are made.

### **Overall Conclusion**

The proposals are administrative and governance-related in nature and do not affect service provision or access to public services.

No significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to protected characteristics, socio-economic factors, children's rights, biodiversity, climate change or data protection. Any potential concerns arising from reduced councillor numbers or the removal of warding arrangements are in the context that currently representatives for wards are not required to live within these wards.

The proposals are expected to have a neutral to positive overall impact, with the most significant positive effect being the promotion and standardisation of community names in accordance with the recommendations of the Welsh Language Commissioner. The slightly higher percentage of Welsh speakers in these eight communities is as a result of chance. The review also supports fairer and more proportionate democratic representation and simpler governance arrangements across Pembrokeshire's community councils.