

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill

Biodiversity Impact Assessment

The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales contains six objectives to reverse the decline of biodiversity which should be used to assess the impacts on biodiversity. They can also help develop and guide actions to comply with the S6 duty. They have been simplified as a set of questions to guide you through the impact assessment.

These questions should be considered whether your proposal has a land management element or not, although some will be particularly relevant if your policy area relates to land management in any way.

You should take a pro-active approach to considering the potential impacts on biodiversity – this is one area where unintended consequences are often overlooked, either through lack of awareness, or because it is difficult to assign a monetary value to biodiversity.

Moreover, the duty requires that we positively seek opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity, both directly (where the intervention involves land management or construction), and indirectly (for example, where there may be an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity). In completing this assessment consider how enhancing biodiversity and promoting resilience of ecosystems contribute reciprocally to the aims of your policy or project.

You will need to record decisions and impacts arising from this assessment. Please note how you have answered each question, or you can use the template at the end of the assessment. Further guidance is available on the intranet.

Consider Questions 1 - 9 for ALL policies

Embedding biodiversity

- 1. How will your proposal integrate biodiversity into decision making?**
 - 1.1 Not directly, but indirectly through improving the ways in which councillors reflect our communities and be more representative of the diversity of interests, priorities and experiences of communities – this will include the experience and interest of the local natural environment (including biodiversity) of local communities, where the natural environment and its biodiversity provides a strong sense of place.
- 2. Has your proposal ensured biodiversity is accounted for in business decisions?**
 - 2.1 Councils will be under an obligation under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (“the 2016 Act”) to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions

3. How does your proposal improve understanding and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity, encouraging others to act?

- 3.1 This will be through the role played by councillors, which under these proposals should be more representative of the diversity of interests, priorities and experiences of communities

Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

4. Have you used the best available evidence of biodiversity to inform your proposal and this assessment?

- 4.1 The lists of species and habitats of principal importance published under Section 7 of the 2016 Act and the State of Natural Resources Report have been considered and there are no direct issues arising. There are no Area Statements available yet.

5. Have you used up to date knowledge of the key impacts on biodiversity to make evidence-based decisions?

- 5.1 There are no specific drivers of change and/or factors which would have a negative impact on biodiversity arising from this proposal.

6. Can your proposal contribute to our body of knowledge for biodiversity?

- 6.1 This will be for principal councils to take forward appropriately.

Governance and support for delivery of biodiversity action

7. Can your proposal support biodiversity action in any way?

- 7.1 This will be for principal councils to take forward appropriately in the context of their duty under Section 6 of the 2016 Act.

8. Can your proposal help to build capacity for biodiversity action?

- 8.1 This will be for principal councils to take forward appropriately in the context of their duty under Section 6 of the 2016 Act.

9. Have you recorded decisions and actions to maintain and enhance biodiversity?

- 9.1 No impacts have been identified and, therefore, none have been recorded.

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