

Savings Proposal: Non-replacement of County Archaeologist following retirement

Wellbeing Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of a proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	330
Brief description:	The County Archaeologist is currently on flexible retirement and will be leaving the Authority on 31/03/2018. The salary has been put forward as a budget saving for 2018-19. This WIA will consider the impacts of this proposal.
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Responsible Service:	Highways & Environmental Services
Localities affected by the proposal:	Whole County,

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

Could you do more to make your approach more sustainable?

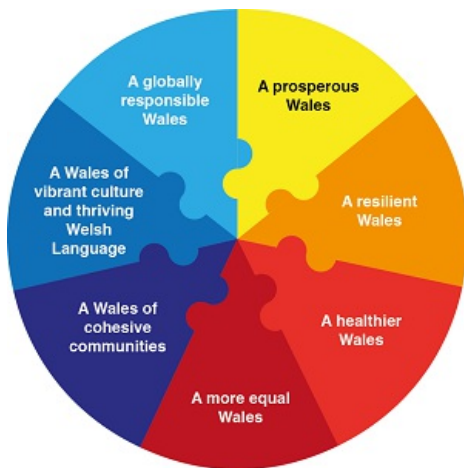


(2 out of 4 stars)

Actual score : 9 / 24.

Summary of impact

Wellbeing Goals



A globally responsible Wales	A prosperous Denbighshire	Negative
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	A resilient Denbighshire	Negative
A Wales of cohesive communities	A healthier Denbighshire	Negative
A more equal Wales	A more equal Denbighshire	Negative
A healthier Wales	A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Negative
A resilient Wales	A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Negative
A prosperous Wales	A globally responsible Denbighshire	Negative

Main conclusions

This proposal would result in the loss of a post that has a specific role and represents wholly the authority's delivery of that role. Any analysis of this will inevitably produce a negative impact. It is a loss of service. However, it should be recognised that Denbighshire is one of only a few Local Authorities [LAs] in Wales that have a County Archaeologist [CA] and the only one in North Wales [Snowdonia National Park has a similar post]. This results in our historic landscape being well promoted, protected and embedded in our planning, countryside, economic and tourism activities. Some of this would still be present when the post is gone but inevitably the focus will not be as strong. Other LAs manage to protect their historic environment but not to the degree that Denbighshire has. The County has used it to bring in grants [Heritage Lottery Fund being the most notable], engage communities, support the success of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB] and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llangollen Canal World Heritage Site and underpin tourism and economic regeneration, particularly in the rural areas. However, given the tough economic climate and the pressure for savings, there is a bigger picture. The retirement of the post holder provides an opportunity to make a saving and prevent the potential redundancy of other staff in the Countryside Service.

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The County Archaeologist role makes a positive contribution to the economic wellbeing of the County and the wider area, in terms of tourism, conservation of the historic and cultural environment and landscape projects. This expertise may be found elsewhere but will be less easy to access and probably cost more if it is removed from the Authority.

Positive consequences identified:

The retirement of the CA provides an opportunity to make obligatory savings for the Countryside and Heritage Service. Taking this opportunity means that other staff may be protected from redundancy [for at least another year].

Unintended negative consequences identified:

The CA is constantly aiming to improve the condition and knowledge of the County's Historic Environment. A better quality historic environment is intrinsically good, but also good for residents and tourists alike. Examples of projects which have achieved this are Castell Dinas Brân, Clive Engine House, Dyserth, Gop cairn (in the AONB), Jubilee Tower, Moel Famau, several of the areas hillforts in both public and private ownership. Following on from projects such as the Heather and Hillforts project, there have been a number of archaeological excavations in the area, particularly at Penycloddiau, Moel y Gaer Bodfari and on the slopes outside Moel Arthur. The historic environment is good for tourism and rural economic regeneration. Having that expertise in the Authority raises the profile and embeds it into the work of the Authority. The CA was strongly involved in the World Heritage Site in the Dee Valley.

This proposal involves a retirement and a loss of a service/role for the Authority. The expertise will be lost and over time the focus on archaeology that currently exists in the County will wane. As part of the role, the CA was involved with volunteers, school placements and university projects in the County.

Mitigating actions:

Arrangements could be made with CPAT [Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust] to provide some services as replacements. These would be under SLAs or specific project briefs and would, by their nature, be less flexible. Certainly planning application consultations will need to be undertaken as archaeology is a 'material consideration' in the planning process.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The CA is instrumental in maintaining a high profile for all aspects of the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. When the post is gone, there will be less of an emphasis on this work and resilience will be diminished.

Positive consequences identified:

The saving from the retirement will protect other staff in the Service who also have a strong role in protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

Unintended negative consequences identified:

Currently the CA is involved in the protection and enhancement of the historic landscape of Denbighshire - ruined castles [Dinas Bran] ,Iron Age Hillforts, parkland and caves for example. Any reduction in their protection will possibly result in a negative impact on biodiversity as a natural progression.

Historic buildings and structures are , by their nature, closely associated with wildlife and often provide ideal habitat for protected species. The CA is involved in the protection of these types of buildings and structures. This work, by default helps biodiversity and wildlife. The bats at Nant Clwyd y Dre is a good example and there have been many other incidents of this connection. If this type of work reduces there is likely to be a negative impact on biodiversity, habitats and species.

The role of County Archaeologist inputs into interpretation of the historic environment in the County and the AONB, leaflets about particular sites (Dinas Bran, Gop, Hillforts) as well as contributions to other more general information eg. Limestone Legacy leaflet, Community Miles, panels on sites like Hillforts, Dinas Bran soon to be OPL projects If this expertise is lost the information for interpretation material will take longer to find and potentially will be more generalised. The CA is involved in publicity for the historic environment, event organisation, walks, talks and written materials. This is likely to be 'light touch' in the future.

Mitigating actions:

CPAT can be contracted to complete various aspects of the role and other ecological contractors can be engaged to undertake specific activities but this work will be infrequent and limited in its scope.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The proposal will inevitably reduce the opportunities for engagement with the historic landscape.

Positive consequences identified:

Unintended negative consequences identified:

Currently, in the county, the historic landscape is promoted and is relatively accessible for recreation. Walks and events are also held in the historic environment. This gives opportunities to encourage residents' health and wellbeing. Protection of the intrinsic value of the historic landscape has benefits for peoples' health/ wellbeing. The CA is involved in all this activity

As above in health and wellbeing. The CA organised archaeological 'digs' open to the public and volunteers as well as other walks and events. Archaeology is popular with older people and the events and walks are very well attended by that demographic.

There is a proven strong link between engagement with the outdoors and green environment and individuals' emotional and mental health- eco therapy. Opportunities to visit the historic environment of the county contributed to that agenda.

Mitigating actions:

The countryside service can continue to offer opportunities to engage with the historic environment and landscape but it will not have quite the focus that it currently has.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The proposal may have a negative impact on access to green outdoor space and the natural environment and consequently reduce the opportunities for people with protected characteristics..

Positive consequences identified:

Unintended negative consequences identified:

The proposal may have a negative impact on access to green outdoor space and the natural environment.

Mitigating actions:

Ensure that any remaining or new opportunities for the public to engage with the historic environment are accessible to all as is reasonably possible.

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The CA is active in numerous communities throughout the County and local communities have an interest in their local history. This support and expertise will be reduced.

Positive consequences identified:

Unintended negative consequences identified:

The proposal reduces engagement and volunteering opportunities for residents and visitors. The CA is involved in the protection of the historic environment- landscape, houses, monuments etc. This improves the look and appearance of the County[the work at Dinas Bran is a good example- led by the CA] and contributes to resilient communities and tourism.

Mitigating actions:

The Countryside Service will continue to work to improve the historic landscape of the County and engage communities to protect their local environment, through community volunteering and support.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	As an important aspect of the culture and heritage of the County, the historic landscape will be less well considered as a result of this proposal.

Positive consequences identified:

Unintended negative consequences identified:

The Welsh language is synonymous with the landscape and protecting and enhancing the latter improves the former. History and culture are interwoven in place names and landscape descriptions. The CA's work helps the conservation of the Welsh language. The CA is primarily involved in conserving and enhancing culture and heritage - buildings of cultural or historical importance, special sites, monuments and landmarks.

Mitigating actions:

Countryside and Heritage services will endeavour to continue to protect and enhance the heritage of the county where it is able.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Negative
Justification for impact	The historic environment and landscape has intrinsic worth. Its protection benefits the County, Wales and contributes to global historic diversity. The proposal might reduce our ability to contribute to that diversity.

Positive consequences identified:

Unintended negative consequences identified:

Planning Services may be less able to find information about the historic landscape to help with planning decisions and to protect the historic environment. The AONB has objectives to protect and enhance the historic landscape of the protected area. These objectives might be more difficult to fulfil when the CA leaves.

Mitigating actions:

Develop a robust SLA with CPAT to deliver the Planning aspects of the CA's current work. This will help to protect the historic environment under threat from development.