

## **Initial Outline Equality Assessment**

### **Introduction**

This assessment relates to Cumbria County Council's proposition and business case for local government reform in Cumbria. The full proposition, business case and additional information will be submitted to the Government by 9 December 2020. The submission of these documents is in response to the invitation to all principal local councils in Cumbria from the Government to submit proposals for reform.

The proposition, business case and additional information set out the Council's ambitions for local government reform; an assessment of options for reform; a proposal for the County Council and 6 District Councils to be replaced by one new Council which will provide all principal authority functions in Cumbria; a financial analysis of the impacts of the proposal; and an outline plan for delivery.

The documents submitted provide a high-level assessment of impact on outcomes of each of the options, and a high-level outline model for how a new council for Cumbria would operate.

The documents do not propose detailed models of engagement, planning and design of services and service delivery at strategic or local level. The detailed models will be subject to further engagement and development through the transition period, and primarily, be the responsibility of the new organisation once established.

Consideration of the proposals submitted by Cumbria County Council and other principal local authorities in Cumbria and subsequent decisions on the future structures of local government in Cumbria are subject to Government decision over the coming months.

This initial, high-level assessment provides a robust foundation for further work. As detailed proposals for the operating model of a new Council, new locality arrangements, and reformed service delivery arrangements are developed, assessment of the impact of changes on those with protected characteristics, other groups and geographic impacts will be a key element of each workstream from the beginning.

### **Summary**

The proposals submitted by the Council are high level and do not make proposals in relation to the policy and delivery of specific services under the proposed new organisation. This is, therefore, a broad assessment of the impact of the proposed reform on people with protected characteristics and other groups, based on evidence and information about the Cumbrian population.

Cumbria County Council's proposition and business case for local government reform sets out the ambition to improve outcomes for all through strengthened leadership and more joined up, more effective and efficient, and simpler public services.

The proposal that Cumbria County Council is confirmed as the Continuing Authority, as well as the countywide geographic footprint of the proposed new Council, will minimise disruption to service delivery as transition is completed and new transformation programmes are developed and delivered.

## Age

Cumbria has an older age profile than the national average, with lower proportions of younger residents and higher proportions of older residents. Young people aged 0-15 make up 16.5% of the population in Cumbria, compared to 19.1% in England and Wales. There is a higher proportion of young people in the Carlisle district of Cumbria (17.8%) than in other areas of the county, with South Lakeland having the lowest proportion of young people at 14.8%. The proportion of young people in Cumbria is due to decrease further as ONS population projections for 2041 project people aged 0-15 will make up 15.1% of the Cumbrian population.

People aged 65 and over make up 24.5% of the population in Cumbria, compared to 18.5% in England and Wales. South Lakeland has the highest proportion of older people at 28.5%. This ageing profile is projected to increase as ONS population projects for 2041 project that people aged 65 and over will make up 32.4% of the population in Cumbria.

The benefits of joining up services such as social care and housing will have specific benefits for particular age groups. Other age-specific issues include particularly high rates of unemployment for 16-24 year olds in Barrow-in-Furness, as compared to the national average. The rate of those Not in Employment, Education or Training in Cumbria is 5.9% in October 2020.

Cumbria County Council's proposal will maintain a Cumbria-wide footprint for critical services to these age groups, including adults and children's social care, resulting in minimal disruption during transition. For all age groups there are opportunities to join up services to and improve outcomes e.g. leisure services and public health.

*Data: ONS Mid-2019 population estimates; Department for Education National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) 2020; ONS Labour Market Statistics 2020*

## Race

Cumbria has among the fewest numbers of people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds in England; although the rate of increase has been above the national average. Minority Ethnic people make up 3.5% of the county's population, compared to 20.2% in England. 98.5% of Cumbria's population is White, compared to 85.4% in England.

Assessment of impact on people with protected characteristics and other groups will be a key part of the development of locality engagement, design and delivery arrangements. Evidence used will include relevant data and analysis in relation to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on specific groups.

Cumbria County Council's proposal will maintain a Cumbria-wide footprint for key services to people from different ethnicities, and will build on the existing countywide partnership arrangements between local authorities and Cumbria-wide representative and advocacy groups for Black and Minority Ethnic people and communities.

*Data: ONS Mid-2019 population estimates; ONS Census 2011*

## Sex

There is a slightly higher proportion of females rather than males in Cumbria's population. Females make up 50.7% of the population, and males 49.3%.

Issues such as disparities in health outcomes between sexes, for example life expectancy for Cumbria's men is lower than the England average, will feature strongly in the future assessment of detailed proposals. The proposals to join up public health, housing, leisure and culture in a single authority provide opportunities to build on strength-based and preventative approaches to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

*Data: ONS Mid-2019 population estimates*

## Gender reassignment

In 2018, the Government estimated that there were 200,000 to 500,000 people in England undergoing or had completed a process to reassign their gender. Based on the 1% (or just under) estimation of the England population as a whole, the numbers of people reassigning or who have reassigned their gender could be around 5,000.

Particular impacts of changes to policy and services are around access to services and opportunity. These will be included as a focus of assessment of detailed proposals.

*Data: UK Government, 2018*

## Religion / belief

Cumbria has a higher proportion of Christians than England as a whole. 71.9% of people in Cumbria are Christian compared to 59.4% in England. Cumbria also has a lower proportion of residents of other religions or beliefs than England, and of those with no religion – 20.3% in Cumbria and 24.7% in England.

Impacts on people of different religion and beliefs will be assessed when designing future arrangements.

*Data: Census 2011*

## Sexual orientation

The ONS Annual Population Survey 2018 states that 2.1% of the population aged 16 and over in the North West of England identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Cumbria's population, as part of the North West, is likely to include a similar proportion of people who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.

The impacts of changes to local government in Cumbria and related policy and services will be assessed on future proposals. Development of proposals will build on existing, established engagement mechanisms in Cumbria.

*Data: ONS Annual Population Survey 2018*

## Marital status

Cumbria has a higher proportion of residents who are married than England as a whole, and less single people. In Cumbria 50.8% of people are married, compared to 46.6% in England. 29.1% of people in Cumbria are single, compared to 34.6% in England. The proportion of people in a registered same sex civil partnership is the same in Cumbria as in England – 0.2%.

The impacts of reform will be assessed to identify specific impacts on people related to their marital status when detailed proposals are brought forward.

*Data: ONS Census 2011*

## Disability

Cumbria has a higher proportion of people with a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities a lot than England as a whole. 9.7% of Cumbria's population have a long-term health problem or disability compared to 8.3% of England's population. Some areas of Cumbria have much higher levels than the national and regional average – 13% in Barrow-in-Furness and over 10% in Allerdale and Copeland.

The benefits of joining up social care, housing and some welfare-related services will have particular benefits for some people with disabilities.

*Data: Census 2011*

## Maternity

Cumbria has a similar fertility rate to England as a whole. The total fertility rate in Cumbria in 2019 was 1.65 and in England it was 1.66. In 2019, there were 4,233 live births in Cumbria, and 26 of these were to mothers aged 18 and under.

Specific impacts will be assessed in relation to future policy and service changes.

*Data: ONS 2020*

## Socio-economic / low income

Cumbria has areas of high multiple deprivation, and areas particularly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and related restrictions.

Deprivation is generally concentrated in areas of the south and west of the county. 8.1% of Cumbria's lower super output areas are in the 10% most deprived LSOAs nationally. All of these are located in Allerdale, Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle and Copeland. Barrow-in-Furness is the most deprived Cumbrian district.

Child poverty is also relatively high in areas of Cumbria - overall 18% of Cumbria's children aged 0-15 live in low income families, the same as the national average. However, proportions are above the national average in Allerdale (19%), Barrow-in-Furness (20%) and Copeland (19%).

It is estimated that one in ten (10.8%) of Cumbrian households have an annual household income of less than £10,000 compared to 8.4% in England. Median household income in Cumbria is estimated to be lower than that in England (£29,434 vs £33,820).

Whilst unemployment is relatively low compared to the national average in Cumbria as a whole, but with some areas of high levels of long-term unemployment and of youth unemployment.

The Covid-19 pandemic is having an impact on employment, health inequalities and on household incomes across the county. The Eden and South Lakeland areas are experiencing higher levels of unemployment and hardship due to the major role of the tourism and hospitality in the local economy.

*Data: IMD 2019, HMRC 2016, ONS 2020; DWP (Children in Low-Income Families Local Area Statistics 2018-19); CACI Ltd 2020*

## **Rurality**

Cumbria is a predominantly rural county, with 53% of the county's population resident in rural areas, compared to 18% nationally (England & Wales). Proportions are larger than the national average in all districts, with the largest proportions in Allerdale (72%) and Eden (70%). Rurality can provide specific challenges in terms of delivery of and access to services, with areas of Eden experiencing the most barriers to access to services in the country.

The further development of the Council's proposition to strengthen locality working and the role of Town and Parish Councils will be important in building on the understanding of the needs and ambitions of rural communities across the county. Detailed proposals will primarily be brought forward by the proposed new Council. Assessment of impact on people with protected characteristics and other groups will also be a key part of the development of locality engagement, design and delivery arrangements.

*Data: ONS Mid-2019 population estimates; ONS Rural / Urban classification 2011*

## **Council Staff**

Organisational and structural change will have impacts on the staff of all relevant local authorities and their engagement in the process of designing and implementing these will be important. Equality impact assessments will be carried out on all proposed changes when they are brought forward, and will inform decision-making.

*December 2020*