

Report

Cabinet Member Community and Resources

Part 1

Date: 24 December 2019

Subject **Street Naming & Numbering Policy**

Purpose To review guidance in relation to the Street Naming & Numbering Policy to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment Wales Act and the General Data Protection Regulations.

Author Senior Corporate Gazetteer Officer

Ward General

Summary The Council's Street Naming and Numbering policy was adopted in 2013. Although a number of minor amendments have been incorporated the policy has remained largely unchanged since then. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulations necessitates a review of the policy to ensure that the council continues to meet its obligations and compliance with statutory duties. It also provides an opportunity to undertake a wider review of the policy to ensure that it continues to meet requirements.

A formal, public consultation exercise was carried out seeking views on the revised policy. Overall the responses were positive and support the policy, which is attached as an appendix to this report.

Proposal **Approval and adoption of proposed amendments**

Action by Head of People & Business Change

Timetable As reported

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of People & Business Change
- Head of Law & Regulation
- Head of City Services
- Head of Finance
- Cabinet Member for Community & Resources
- Businesses and members of the public

Signed

Background

The Council has statutory responsibilities and powers under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1925 for the naming and renaming of streets within its designated administrative boundary. It also provides additional discretionary services associated with residential and commercial property numbering and/or naming schemes.

The purpose of this control is to ensure that any new or amended street and residential and commercial property numbering and/or naming is allocated logically and in a consistent manner. This supports the effective delivery of services from both public and private sector bodies and in particular ensures that the emergency services are able to locate any address.

The Council provides a comprehensive Street Naming and Numbering service to customers encompassing a broad range of application types including new developments and the renaming/renumbering of existing streets and properties. This service is provided by the Head of People and Business Change and Newport Intelligence Hub.

All street naming and numbering changes are undertaken through a formal application process and following approval are notified to all public sector partners, which include the emergency services, other public sector partner organisations and Royal Mail.

Proposed changes and additions to the Street Naming and Numbering Policy

The Council's Street Naming and Numbering policy was adopted in 2013. Although a number of minor amendments have been incorporated the policy has remained largely unchanged since then. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulations necessitates a review of the policy to ensure that the council continues to meet its obligations and compliance with statutory duties. It also provides an opportunity to undertake a wider review of the policy to ensure that it continues to meet requirements.

Welsh Language considerations

Following the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards a review of the adopted policy was required in order to reflect the resultant changes and to align the policy with the new legislation.

It should be noted that only bilingual street name plates, which have come into effect since adoption of the original policy, will be subject to a bilingual replacement. All historic, monolingual street name plates will remain in the known language and would be replaced, like for like, not by bilingual versions; this would be covered in the street name signage replacement programme but the Welsh language reserve could be used for one off costs.

Paragraph number: 1.2.1

As a Welsh Unitary Authority, Newport City Council is subject to the provisions contained within the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the subsequent standards given to the authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner within its Compliance Notice. These statutory requirements, together with the authority's 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy stress that the image and public face of the local authority should treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language and for this principle to be reflected in the services which the authority delivers.

The Welsh Language Commissioner and Welsh Government are responsible for developing all aspects of the Welsh Language.

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 was enacted to make important improvements to the existing systems for the protection and management of the Welsh historic environment. The policy has been updated, following consultation with CADW, to reflect the requirements of the act, to

encourage consideration of the Historic Environment and to seek to retain historic names protecting the heritage of the city.

Where a developer is proposing a theme for street names on a new development the policy directs them to consider the following:

Paragraph number 2.3.1

In order to retain the historic legacy of the city, and to protect the Welsh historic environment, consideration must be given to the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the list of historic places names which can be accessed through the historic environments records

<https://historicplacenames.rcahmw.gov.uk/>

Where a property owner is considering changing the name of a property the policy directs them to consider the following:

Paragraph number 3.6.2

When considering applications for a change to a property name that appears in an official address, the Council will also check the proposal against the list of historic place names. If there is good evidence that the property has a historic name that has appeared on historic mapping, then the Council will ask the applicant to reconsider the proposed change and retain, or perhaps adopt, the historic name.

<https://historicplacenames.rcahmw.gov.uk/>

General Data Protection Regulations

General Data Protection Regulations require the inclusion of a retention policy. A retention policy for Street Naming & Numbering documents has been developed following consultation with the Information Manager.

Paragraph number 7

This retention policy covers documents created and received for the purposes of street naming and numbering.

| Function | Retention Action |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Application for a new street name and to rename an existing street | Destroy 7 years after last action |
| Application for new property number or name and to renumber or rename an existing property | Destroy 7 years after last action |
| Official decision document approving a new street name or approving a rename to an existing street | Permanent |
| Official decision document approving a new property number or name and approving a renumber or rename to an existing property | Permanent |
| Request to Royal Mail for postcode allocation | Destroy 7 years after last action |
| Confirmation from Royal Mail of postcode allocation | Destroy 7 years after last action |
| New street name and renamed street allocation or distribution document | Destroy 7 years after last action |
| New property number or name and renumber or rename to an existing property allocation or distribution document | Destroy 7 years after last action |

Additional changes

The review of the policy provides an opportunity to make a number of additional changes in order to address issues that have come to light since adoption of the policy in 2013.

Unofficial numbering schemes

A paragraph has been added to help to avoid unofficial numbering schemes or postcodes being introduced prior to official naming and numbering. Often these unofficial schemes differ to the official schemes, which are later applied, as they have not followed national standards and best practice for numbering schemes; this can cause confusion for existing occupants and for service providers.

Paragraph number 1.7.4

Care should be taken to avoid giving inferred postal addresses or postcodes to potential occupiers or purchasers before formal approval has been issued by the Council. It is likely that any presumed plot or unit numbering scheme will not meet the requirements of the Council and, therefore, the official numbering scheme may differ.

Street names starting with 'The'

The emergency services have made a request to Street Naming & Numbering authorities nationwide to avoid the use of street names starting with 'The' when naming new streets (eg: The Coldra). This will help avoid delays experienced by command and control centres when processing 999 calls. There are 24 streets named 'The...' in Newport alone. This will apply to new street names only; existing streets will be unaffected.

Paragraph number 2.3.1

Street names starting with 'The' should be avoided. The use of 'The' in street names has been found to cost vital seconds for command and control centres when processing 999 calls.

Land Registry

A paragraph has been added to clarify the council's responsibility and the owner's responsibility regarding notifying Land Registry of changes to an address. Contact details for the Land Registry have also been added to assist applicants.

Paragraph number 4.1.2

The Council, under its delegated authority, will notify Land Registry of new and changed addresses, however, the owner of the property will be responsible for contacting Land Registry should they wish to have the 'registered title' updated. See 8.1.4. for contact details.

Paragraph number 8.1.4

Land Registry

- Citizen Centre, PO Box 74, Gloucester, GL14 9BB
- Email: customersupport@landregistry.gov.uk
- Customer Support line: 0300 006 0411 (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday)
- Contact Us form at: <http://site.landregistry.gov.uk/contact-us/form>

Formal public consultation

Formal consultation on proposed changes to the Street Naming & Numbering policy was undertaken. The consultation, which ran for 4 weeks, was published on our external website - on the 'Have your say'

page and on the Street Naming & Numbering page - and details were sent directly to developers and applicants who had submitted an application for street naming and numbering within the last 10 years. The response rate was low with only 4 responses (3 in English and 1 in Welsh). Overall the responses were positive and support the policy. It is felt that the comments and issues raised are adequately addressed within the policy and, therefore, no changes are proposed.

A summary of the questions, responses and evaluations are attached at Appendix 1.

Financial Summary

There are no costs associated with the approval and adoption of these amendments.

Risks

The purpose of the amendments are to maintain effectiveness of the policy and to reduce the risks of not adhering to new guidelines and meeting new requirements.

| Risk | Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L) | Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L) | What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect | Who is responsible for dealing with the risk? |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Failing to meet requirements of the Welsh Language standards | M | L | Sought the views and guidance of the Policy & Diversity Officer and updated the policy accordingly | NIH Manager |
| Failing to meet requirements of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 | L | L | Introduced changes to Street Naming & Numbering processes to ensure compliance with the requirements. | NIH Manager |
| Failing to meet GDPR requirements on retention of personal data. | M | L | Published a Street Naming & Numbering privacy notice. Developed a retention policy for Street Naming & Numbering documents. | NIH Manager |
| Potential for delay for emergency vehicles during 999 calls should streets continue to be named using 'The'. | H | L | Implemented changes to Street Naming & Numbering practices in line with requests and advice from the emergency services. | NIH Manager |

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The proposed amendments to the policy support the Council's aim to ensure that a consistent, non-contentious and non-subjective approach is adopted in the delivery of the service. This will ensure that the heritage and legacy of the City is maintained while complying with:

The Council's [Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice April 2016](#)

The Council's [Information Retention and Disposal Policy](#)

The Council's [Newport Well-being Plan 2018 - 2023](#)

Options Available and considered

Option 1: Do nothing – continue using the existing Street Naming and Numbering policy as it is. The policy would not be compliant with new legislative requirements regarding Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulations. The policy would also fail to address the additional requirements identified.

Option 2: Adopt the proposed amendments to the Street Naming and Numbering policy as outlined within the report.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 2: Adopt the proposed amendments to the Street Naming and Numbering policy as outlined within the report.

This will ensure the council meets its obligations and duties in regard to the Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulations. The policy would also address the additional requirements of the Emergency Services and the Land Registry and would assist the council in discharging its statutory Street Naming & Numbering function.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct consequences for the budget as a result of the amended policy being adopted; all of the amendments and any Welsh language implications will be met from existing budgets within service areas.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council has a range of statutory powers relating to the naming and numbering of streets, under the Town Improvements Clauses Act 1847 (numbering of properties and street naming), the Public Health Amendment Act 1907 (alteration of street names) and Section 17-19 of the Public Health act 1925 (notification of street names and name plates). The Council also has incidental discretionary powers in relation to naming and numbering schemes for residential and commercial developments. The Council can charge reasonable fees to cover their costs of providing these discretionary street naming and numbering services in accordance with section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003. The purpose of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy is to provide a logical and consistent approach to the exercise of these powers and to ensure that the public, the postal service and emergency services can locate property addresses quickly and efficiently. The naming policy reflects the Council's statutory duties under the Welsh Language Standards, but has also been updated to include the need to retain historic names which reflect the heritage of Newport in accordance with the requirements of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the need for a retention policy to comply with GDPR. The updated policy has been the subject of public consultation, but no amendments are required to address any of the issues raised.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The Council's Street Naming and Numbering policy was adopted in 2013. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards, the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulations necessitates a review of the policy to ensure that the council continues to meet its obligations and compliance with statutory duties. As author of this report, the full comments of the Head of People and Business Change are contained within the body of the report.

There are no direct HR implications contained within this report and it takes account of the sustainable development principle contained in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Comments of Non-Executive Members

Councillor G Berry:

I agree with the report and therefore support its introduction.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful

discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on the street naming and numbering policy was open to all of our citizens regardless of their age. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data; and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The proposed amendments support the five ways of working in the delivery of Newport's Well-being Plan 2018 - 2023:

- Long term – Compliance with the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 will help preserve historic, Welsh place names. The policy also requires chosen street names to reflect the history or geography of a site and all new streets to be named in Welsh and English with Welsh appearing first on street name plates. These requirements will help to preserve local historic links, and the Welsh Language, for future generations. Introducing a retention policy will help us meet the requirements of GDPR going forward.
- Prevention – Taking notice of requests from stakeholders with regard to naming and numbering conventions will help to prevent identified issues from either occurring or from getting worse. Employing consistency and best practice within numbering schemes will aid identifying and locating properties long after developments are completed.
- Integration – The Street Naming and Numbering policy governs the creation of addresses which feed into the Corporate Address Gazetteer. This, in turn, underpins services across the Council, as well as national datasets, enabling residents to access online services, banking, insurance, register to vote, receive deliveries and so on.
- Collaboration – Collaboration is regularly undertaken within the authority. For example, we work with City Services regarding street name plates and the provision of Streets and Additional Street Data. We assisted Cadw with the development of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016. We work with Education for development of resilient home to school measurements.
- Involvement – The Street Naming and Numbering process involves consultation with stakeholders including developers, Ward Members, the Royal Mail, South Wales Fire & Rescue and Gwent Police. When appropriate we will look to collaborate with the community to suggest possible street names. We have previously worked with local school children, local historians and experts on relevant subjects.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The proposed changes support the work of the emergency services as outlined.

Consultation

A formal, public consultation was carried out as outlined.

Background Papers

Historic Environment Records in Wales: Compilation and Use

<https://cadw.gov.wales/sites/default/files/2019-05/20170523HERs%20in%20Wales%20Compilation%20and%20Use%20-%20ENG.pdf>.

Dated: 24 December 2019

Appendix 1 - Responses to the public consultation:

Q1: Please indicate your interest in this consultation (eg resident, developer, councillor etc)

The respondents considered themselves residents of Newport, a developer, someone who works in Newport and a local business person

Q2: Newport has a significant historical background. To help preserve this heritage, the policy proposes that preference will be given to naming schemes and streets with an historical and local context. Do you agree with this proposal?

3 of the respondents agreed that streets should be named with a historical and local context. 1 respondent partly agreed.

Comments:

“Yes overall but I think there is room for flexibility on this in some cases. For example it would be acceptable to use a Composer name for a development in Ringland as this is an existing theme on the street names of the area.”

Q3: The Street Naming and Numbering Policy sets out a number of protocols for naming and numbering new development schemes and re-naming and re-numbering existing developments (sections 2 and 3). Do the protocols clearly explain the processes which will be followed?

All respondents agreed that the protocols in the policy clearly explain the processes which will be followed.

Q4: The Street Naming and Numbering Policy identifies a number of partners and operational stakeholders (such as the emergency services) who will be notified on completion of an application for Street Naming and Numbering (section 4). Are there any other partners who should be included in this list?

No responses

Q5: The application process varies depending on the type of application; does the policy explain the application process clearly? (paragraphs 1.7 to 1.8)

2 of the respondents agreed that the policy explains the application process clearly.

Q6: Any other comments?

“Please use English Names”

“I think you charge too much for block registration of small units on a single site. The planning application fee is a substantial amount of money and this should cover providing addresses. Many councils in Wales do not charge for this service.”

“The naming of new streets is very, very stupid and potentially dangerous. Giving the same street names in similar areas, is a terrible idea. i.e. Grenader drive, Grenader avenue, Grenadier walk, etc, etc. Names MUST BE DIFFERENT. We keep getting each other's mail for a start. Also the emergency services constantly turn up at the wrong address because of the STUPID STREET NAMING adopted by Newport City Council. Or does the council think we should get out more and support this by insuring our mail is constantly mis-delivered and we have to take the mail to the correct address and we know that there is an emergency in another street (thanks for telling me, but wouldn't your time be better spent going to the emergency and not stopping off at a few similar sounding addresses 'on the way').”

“I would like to see a clause to note that consideration should be given to whether a Welsh version of a street name will work before appointing a name for that street. A mess like "Monmouth Castle Avenue”

(Mon Bank) should be avoided if they do not "work" in Welsh (or Cardiff's policy of appointing names that are either Welsh or English, rather than bilingual) may be followed."

Consultation outcome

In relation to the consultation responses it is felt that the policy addresses the issues raised.

In Q2 flexibility was requested regarding the continuation of an existing naming theme, however, existing street names form part of the history of a site and as such consideration would be given to continuing a theme where appropriate.

Further comments included a request for the use of English only street names, however, as a Welsh Unitary Authority, Newport City Council is subject to the provisions contained within the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the subsequent standards given to the authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner within its Compliance Notice. These statutory requirements, together with the authority's 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy stress that the image and public face of the local authority should treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language and for this principle to be reflected in the services which the authority delivers.

One response raised the issue of fees. Most Welsh authorities now charge for providing street naming and numbering services. Whilst the level of charges differs between areas Newport's fees are in line with neighbouring authorities. The fees are reviewed separately from the policy; a review is currently underway.

Naming streets similarly but with different suffixes is no longer permitted. In paragraph 2.3.1 the adopted Street Naming & Numbering policy states "The suggested street or property naming scheme will not be the same or similar to any existing names in Newport to avoid possible confusion".

The final comment is regarding Welsh versions of the street name. Newport adopted the policy of naming all new streets in equal status Welsh and English following discussion with the Welsh Language Commissioner and in line with their guidance (section 1.2 of the policy). There is no intention to deviate from this. In the example given, Monmouth Castle Drive / Rhodfa Monmouth Castle, 'Monmouth Castle' is the name of a Castle class steam locomotive; the name 'Monmouth Castle' isn't translated because to do so would change it's meaning resulting in the historical link being lost.