



REPORT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

23 May 2018

Report by: Alwyn Jones - GwE Assistant Director

Subject: Welsh in Education

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The Joint Committee is asked to approve the proposals outlined below (4) in order to empower the Authorities and the Region to respond to and deliver the vision of Welsh Government as noted in:

- *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*
- Education in Wales: Our national mission - Action Plan 2017-21
- Welsh in education - Action Plan 2017-21
- One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Welsh Government's vision - *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*: responding to the challenge of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 calls for far-reaching changes. The aim of WG is:

- **Statutory education:** create a statutory education system which increases the number of confident Welsh speakers.
- **The education workforce, resources and qualifications:** plan in order to increase and improve substantially:
 - the education and training workforce which can teach Welsh and teach through the medium of Welsh
 - the resources and qualifications needed

In order to achieve the target, Welsh Government will drive the following transformational changes within the education sector:

- Increase the proportion of each school year group receiving Welsh-medium education from 22 per cent (based on 7,700 seven-year-old learners in 2015/16) to 30 per cent (about 10,500 in each year group) by 2031, and then to 40 per cent (about 14,000 in each year group) by 2050.
- Transform how we teach Welsh to all learners in order that by 2050 at least 70 per cent of those learners report that they can speak Welsh by the time they leave school.

- Increase the number of primary teachers who can teach in Welsh from 2,900 to 3,900 by 2031 and to 5,200 by 2050; increase the number of secondary teachers who can teach Welsh from 500 to 900 by 2031 and to 1,200 by 2050; and increase the number of secondary teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh from 1,800 to 3,200 by 2031 and to 4,200 by 2050.

Education in Wales: Our national mission, Action Plan 2017-21: developing transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements will be crucial to realising the vision of Welsh Government for children and young people in Wales. The aim is to ensure they have higher standards of literacy and numeracy, they will be more digitally and bilingually competent, and will evolve into enterprising, creative and critical thinkers. The new curriculum will be based on equity and excellence and will help develop young people as confident, capable and caring citizens. Developing Welsh-medium provision and improving the teaching and learning of Welsh for all learners are at the core of these reforms.

The vision of *Welsh in education: Action plan 2017-21* is to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. The guiding principles of this document are as follows:

- Teaching and learning Welsh is recognised and valued as an integral component of Wales' education system from the early years through to post-compulsory provision.
- Through the new curriculum all children and young people in Wales will be ambitious and capable learners who can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, and through digital platforms, using both Welsh and English.
- Learning through the medium of Welsh can enhance Welsh language learning and enable children and young people to develop their confidence to use the language in a wide range of contexts.
- All practitioners and leaders are engaged in developing their Welsh language skills and also their wider understanding of the Welsh language in its historical and cultural context.
- Research into language acquisition, bilingualism and effective Welsh language teaching informs teaching and learning.
- In developing their skills in Welsh and English, children and young people can acquire a foundation for learning additional languages, ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.

One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4: an independent review of Welsh second language in 2013 concluded that it is 'the eleventh hour for Welsh second language'. One of the recommendations in the report was that Welsh Government should revise the curriculum to include 'one continuum of learning for Welsh which would include expectations for pupils learning Welsh in Welsh-medium, bilingual and English-medium schools'.

Following publication of *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* in February 2015, it was concluded that Welsh should remain compulsory up to the age of 16 and that 'there should be a renewed focus in schools on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication'. WG approved the recommendations of the review and it was agreed that a continuum of learning for Welsh

would be developed as part of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales. This continuum will be the basis for teaching and learning Welsh and other languages in the future.

Regional Strategy: In addition, WG is eager for the consortia to draw up a regional strategy for the Welsh language. The strategy should reflect the specific priorities and needs of the region and those of the Local Authorities, giving appropriate consideration to the following:

- The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans of each Education Authority
- Aled Roberts report - A rapid review of The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans of each Authority
- Each Authority's Language Strategy
- Secondary Language Strategy (Gwynedd only)
- The implementation and impact of the Welsh Language Charter in each Authority
- The implementation and impact of *Cymraeg Campus* in each Authority

2.2 THE CURRENT SITUATION

WELSH LANGUAGE SUB-GROUP

The Welsh Language Sub-group is part of the GwE accountability framework. Matters that require attention are directed to the Regional Quality Board (RQB) and then to the Management Board, as required.

The Sub-group is facilitated by Gwynedd Education Authority. Matters set out in the Business Plan are considered, as are matters at the request of the GwE Management Board, Welsh Government and ESTYN, and advice is sought as is appropriate.

The functions of the Sub-group are as follows:

- Draw up a Business Plan to respond to local, regional and national priorities.
- Ensure effective implementation of Business Plan priorities.
- Ensure appropriate accountability of Business Plan priorities.
- Draw up a Business Plan monitoring/progress report and analysis on the basis of delivery and further risk.
- In accordance with the agreed procedure, direct matters that require attention to the Regional Quality Board for further consideration.
- Prepare a quarterly monitoring report for the Regional Quality Board.
- Contribute to planning and recommend courses of action for the Regional Quality Board in terms of grants and regional resources.

The main priorities in the 2017-18 Business Plan were:

- i. Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
- ii. National Language Charter for Primary Schools - (Welsh Government Framework for increasing the use of the Welsh language among children and young people).
- iii. Welsh language Advisory Teachers / Language Centres.
- iv. Training the current workforce across the region / Recruitment and retention of bilingual staff.

- v. Purposeful planning and ensuring progression from the Early Years.
- vi. Welsh second language.
- vii. Supporting Language Use Secondary Project

Welsh Government acknowledges that the education system is the main means of ensuring that children develop their Welsh language skills and of developing new speakers. Therefore, the role and the terms of reference of the Sub-group have evolved as a result of specific projects such as the Language Charter and the Workforce Development Plan. The current arrangements for these specific projects are outlined below.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE REGIONAL LANGUAGE CHARTER SINCE 1 APRIL 2017

Gwynedd Education Authority supports the work of disseminating the Language Charter. It was decided by the GwE Management Board in November 2016 to appoint three Language Charter Co-ordinators for Gwynedd/Môn, Conwy/Denbighshire and Wrexham/Flintshire.

A purposeful management, monitoring and quality assurance procedure was established for the work of the Charter regionally. The Language Charter is one of the priorities noted in the Sub-group Business Plan (Level 2) and the business plans of the three Co-ordinators (Level 3) feed into this regional plan.

DEVELOPING THE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT WELSH IN EDUCATION

In 2017/18, Welsh Government committed a further £4.2m investment to boost the teaching and learning of Welsh and subjects through the medium of Welsh.

The money allocated was to:

- support the delivery of and extend the National Sabbaticals scheme for primary teachers to develop their Welsh language skills.
- improve learners' Welsh language skills through informal opportunities - a support programme to help English-medium schools
- attract Welsh-medium graduates - there is a need to recruit more graduates to become teachers in the Welsh-medium sector and to teach Welsh as a subject.

Furthermore, each consortium received an additional allocation towards Welsh skills professional development and the pedagogy of teaching practitioners.

The consortia were required to undertake a work programme to include:

- developing an understanding of the language skills of practitioners in the region and their ability to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh
- identifying practitioners to take part in the Sabbaticals Scheme on different levels, working with Scheme providers and the Government to prioritise the Scheme's courses.

- undertaking a Welsh language professional development programme for practitioners who support and reinforce the Sabbaticals Scheme, to include mentoring opportunities and school to school support and so forth.
- sharing good practice in terms of effective pedagogy.

Consequently, in 2017/18, the GwE Education Consortium received a grant allocation of £557,051. A Project Board was established to steer the work, and the work programme includes collaborating with the 6 education authorities across north Wales.

For 2018/19, GwE has received a further grant allocation of £614,240.

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT (EIG) / WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLANS

The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The Act places a statutory responsibility on local authorities to prepare and present a **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** to Welsh Government. Following the first three years of the planning cycle, Authorities have now moved onto the next planning phase for 2017-2020.

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) needs to be considered in the context of Welsh Government's wider strategy for the Welsh language, as well as other WG policies and priorities. The WESP must outline how local authorities will deliver WG aims and targets.

The WESP is a strong foundation for the planning of Welsh-medium and bilingual education across Wales.

In terms of the Education Improvement Grant (EIG), authorities are expected to use it to support the delivery of their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Services and provision offered by Authorities vary across the region, from Language Centres to Teams of Welsh Language Advisory Teachers.

BUDGET - SUMMARY

	2017-2018	2018-2019
WG Framework for increasing the use of the Welsh language (Language Charter)	£246,400	£241,400
Developing the workforce to support Welsh in education	£557,051	£614,240
Education Improvement Grant	£2,315,202	£2,138,991
TOTAL	£3,118,653	£2,994,631

3.0 CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 NEXT STEPS / 2018-19 ONWARDS

The Welsh in education Action Plan sets out a specific direction and courses of action to realise the vision of WG, emphasising the need to improve the support for children and young people who are learning Welsh.

It has emerged during recent discussions that there is a clear and integral link between the Sub-group Business Plan priorities, the 'Developing the Workforce' plan, the Project Board priorities and the outcomes of the Authorities' WESPs.

For 2018-19, the consortium is required to develop an action plan for using funding regarding the 'Welsh Government's Framework for increasing the use of the Welsh language (Language Charter)' and 'Developing the workforce to support Welsh in education', to be agreed with Welsh Government policy officials. There is now more flexibility to use the funding in a different way, as long as this meets local, regional and national needs in terms of developing the Welsh language.

Consequently, it is timely to revise the regional structure for setting a strategic direction to support the Welsh language in order to ensure that Authorities and the Region respond to and reflect Government policy direction in this area.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Joint Committee is requested to approve the following recommendations:

- Revise the regional structure for strategic action to support the Welsh language.
- Establish a *Welsh language Strategic Board* to lead, co-ordinate and manage the Welsh language regionally, under the strategic leadership of GwE. Agree terms of reference, membership and an operating procedure, abolishing the Sub-group in its current form.
- Draw up a Regional Level 2 Business Plan for the Welsh language to ensure a regional strategic direction in this area.
- Establish project boards that correspond to Business Plan priorities in order to steer and lead in specific areas. The project boards will be required to draw up a Level 3 Business Plan for each priority area.
- The Strategic Board to be responsible for accountability and the quarterly monitoring of the Business Plans.
- The Strategic Board to receive monitoring/progress reports on Level 3 Business Plans and analyse them on the basis of delivery and further risk. Matters requiring attention to be directed to the Management Board for further consideration as required.

- The Chair of the Welsh Language Strategic Board to be responsible for preparing a quarterly monitoring report.
- Authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans - through the Regional Level 2 Business Plan, identify how the regional work supports the outcomes / priorities noted in the WESP. The Authorities could feed the quarterly monitoring reports to their local WESP Forums.
- The Welsh Language Strategic Board to review the provision that is offered across the region in order to ensure that current resources fully and effectively support and meet local and regional needs.

4.2 RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

Implementation of the above would:

- Set a clear and effective strategic direction, empowering the authorities and the region to respond to and deliver the policy and vision of Welsh Government:
 - *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.*
 - Education in Wales: Our national mission - 2017-21 Action Plan
 - Welsh in education - 2017-21 Action Plan
 - One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4
 - The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan of each Education Authority
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 - Implementation and impact of *Cymraeg Campus* in each Authority
- Ensure a more organised approach and more regional consistency in terms of supporting the Welsh language to respond to local needs.
- Ensure appropriate cohesiveness and capacity to provide a high quality regional service in this area.
- Ensure more effective use of regional resources and better value for money.
- Ensure that expertise and good practice are disseminated across the region.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. For 2018-19, the consortium is required to develop an action plan for using funding regarding the 'Welsh Government's Framework for increasing the use of the Welsh language (Language Charter)' and 'Developing the workforce to support Welsh in education', to be agreed with Welsh Government policy officials. There is now more flexibility to use the funding in a different

way, as long as this meets local, regional and national needs in terms of developing the Welsh language.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1 There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

8.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

8.1 Consultation with the GwE Management Board.

OPINION OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

The present report notes recommendations on the way forward. If the Joint Committee approves the recommendations then a further detailed report will be required seeking approval of certain arrangements. It is also important that the next steps addresses any need for the individual Councils agreement to relevant governance, implementation or financial elements arising.

Statutory Finance Officer:

I note confirmation "There are no financial implications arising from this report" in part 5.1 of the report under 'financial implications'. At a regional level, I agree that there are no financial implications above the specific grant that is available for the review and development work outlined in the report. However, I understand that the proposals outlined may involve implications for the level of provision to be achieved with the grant within some individual education authorities.