

## ITEM 8

<b>MEETING</b>	COUNCIL LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
<b>DATE</b>	15 January 2014
<b>TITLE</b>	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-17
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Consider the contents of the draft version of the Plan and submit comments
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	For approval
<b>REPORT BY</b>	Dewi R Jones, Head of Education
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	CLlr Sian Gwenllian

### Introduction and context

In December 1996, Gwynedd Council published a Welsh Language Plan in compliance with the requirements of the 1993 Welsh Language Act. It was approved by the Welsh Language Board, and it states how the Council, in its dealings with the public, gives equal treatment to Welsh and English.

Under Section 1 and Section 2 of the 1993 Welsh Language Act, the LA was required to provide a Welsh Language Plan that specifically deals with Education [Welsh Education Plan]. Gwynedd Council's initial Welsh Education Plan received approval in November 1998. Following a three year implementation phase of the Welsh Education Plan, a second plan was prepared that was approved in August 2004. A review of the plan was held in 2010 and this Welsh Education Plan was approved by the Welsh Language Board on 30 June 2011. Following this, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2013-14 was prepared and approved.

This year, the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The Act places a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare and introduce a **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** to the Welsh Government. The first plans under the new statutory arrangements will be implemented from 1 April 2014 and will cover a period of 3 years up to March 2017. These plans will outline how local authorities intend to achieve the Welsh Government's objectives and targets that are set out in the Welsh-Medium Education Strategy.

This Strategy is interpreted within the context of Gwynedd Council Language Policy and thus achieve the outcomes. The authority will ensure that the principal elements are reflected and receive due focus in the Strategic Plan.

### Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

The Plans will enable the Welsh Government to monitor how LA's respond to the requirement to implement the Strategy's objectives and contribute towards them through:

- ensuring that every step of local authority education processes includes full consideration of Welsh-medium education;
- extending provision where a need is identified on the basis of improved planning;
- ensuring the delivery of Welsh-medium support services on the basis of consortia.;
- improving standards and extending the use of Welsh by children and young people; and,

- demonstrating progress against the specific targets in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy.

The aim of the Strategic Plan is to:

- expect that local authorities to be accountable to the Welsh Government for planning Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education provision;
- reflect the aims of the Strategy;
- illustrate the current situation, outline appropriate activities and demonstrate improvement;
- be manageable and useful to the local authority; and
- demonstrate clear progress annually **over 3 years** in each local authority and consortium area towards achieving the WMES targets.

The targets contained in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy are the focal-point of the Strategic Plan:

- more seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh as a percentage of the Year 2 cohort;
- more learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary school to secondary school;
- more learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh;
- more learners aged 16-19 studying Welsh and subjects through the medium of Welsh; and
- more learners with improved skills in Welsh.

### **Recommendation**

A drafft copy of the 'Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-17' is appended for the attention of the Language Committee members for their comments as part of the consultation process before presenting the drafft version to the Government by 20 January 2014.