

MEETING:	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE:	OCTOBER 23 2014
TITLE:	ENQUIRY STRUCTURE FOR THE LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
AUTHOR:	EQUALITY AND LANGUAGE OFFICER
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:	TO ASCERTAIN THE COMMITTEE'S OPINION OF THE POSSIBILITIES AND AREAS OF ENQUIRY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. During the Language Committee of 26/06/14, a request was put forward for the Committee to take a more proactive role in relation to some subject areas: One that would lead to a more detailed response and more concrete recommendations than that allowed by the Committee's usual meetings.
- 1.2. It was noted that clarity was necessary about any new role and also the capacity of our structures to support such a proposal. The purpose of the report is to outline what may be possible and to decide on what areas the Committee would like to investigate.
- 1.3. Any arrangement would have to be compatible with the Language Committee's terms of reference:
 - Oversee Gwynedd Council's Language Scheme.
 - Set a strategic direction on matters relating to the Welsh language as required.
 - Work as a consultative body on strategies to promote the Welsh language within the county, making suggestions to Cabinet as required.

2. POSSIBILITIES FOR THE ENQUIRY STRUCTURE.

- 2.1. To keep a clear focus on the work, it is suggested that one enquiry only be undertaken at a time, with a maximum of 2 enquiries within a calendar year. This would be similar to the Scrutiny Enquiry arrangements.
- 2.2. It should be decided whether the structure will address the Council's interior work, or wider matter in addition. Note however that this is a Committee that deals with the Council's own policies and arrangements. If practicality and results are the aim, this would be much easier to achieve through concentrating on what is within our control.
- 2.3. Having identified internal concerns, a Sub-Group of the language Committee could come together to discuss matters in detail and present recommendations to the relevant Department or Unit, requesting a response and monitoring action.

- 2.4. By looking beyond the Council's arrangements, it must be accepted that practical solutions will not be as easy to achieve unless we have control and authority over the body in question. This kind of work is likely to lead to lobbying as opposed to amendment and improvement. It should also be noted that this approach may lead to long and complex discussions which would be more of a drain on the Council's capacity.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. The Committee's opinion is sought on:
- The structural recommendations outlined in this report
 - Priorities for areas of further enquiry.