



# Complete Agenda

**Democratic Service**  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Meeting

**LANGUAGE COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.00 am, MONDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2022**

Location

**Virtual Meeting**

Contact Point

**Rhodri Jones**

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(DISTRIBUTED 14/06/22)

## **LANGUAGE COMMITTEE**

### **MEMBERSHIP (15)**

#### **Plaid Cymru (10)**

##### Councillors

Menna Baines  
Alan Jones Evans  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Llio Elenid Owen  
Elfed Williams

Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn  
Jina Gwyrfai  
Gwynfor Owen  
Meryl Roberts  
Sasha Williams

#### **Independent (5)**

##### Councillors

Richard Glyn Roberts  
Eirwyn Williams  
Vacant Seat - Independent

Peter Thomas  
Gruffydd Williams

#### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

#### **Other Invited Member**

Councillor Menna Jones, Cabinet Member Corporate Support - The Welsh Language

# AGENDA

**1. ELECT CHAIR**

To elect Chair for 2022-2023

**2. ELECT VICE CHAIR**

To elect Vice Chair for 2022-2023

**3. APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence.

**4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest

**5. URGENT BUSINESS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration

**6. MINUTES**

5 - 13

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2022 be signed as a true record (attached)

**7. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS**

14 - 39

To consider and discuss the Annual Report and offer observations on matters contained in the Report.

**8. PROMOTIONAL SCHEME - ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELFARE SECTOR**

40 - 46

To submit information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy and how they attempt to promote the Welsh Language in their work.

**9. PROMOTIONAL SCHEME - CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES SECTOR**

47 - 51

To submit information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy and how they attempt to promote the Welsh Language in their work.

**10. LANGUAGE POLICY**

52 - 74

To consider and discuss the revision of the Language Policy and approve the recommendation of seeking the Cabinet Members' approval.



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## **LANGUAGE COMMITTEE THURSDAY 7 APRIL, 2022**

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**PRESENT:** Alwyn Gruffydd (Chair)  
Judith Mary Humphreys (Vice-chair)

**Councillors:** Elwyn Edwards, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Elin Walker Jones, Olaf Cai Larsen, John Pughe Roberts and Elfed Williams.

**OFFICERS:** Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Service Manager), Llywela Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser), Gwenllian Mair Williams (Language Adviser), Llio Mai Hughes (Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer), Bet Huws (Gwynedd Language Development Officer - Meirionnydd), Mei Owen (Language Development Centre Officer) and Sioned Mai Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

**OTHERS INVITED:** Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Cabinet Member for Corporate Support).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Item 5: Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director) and Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services).

Item 6: Huw Williams (Head of Gwynedd Consultancy)

Item 7: Sioned E. Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department)

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Beca Brown, Eric M. Jones, Eirwyn Williams and Elwyn Jones (Vice-chair of the Council)

**2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received.

**3. URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent items were received.

**4. MINUTES**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 25 January 2022 as a true record.

An update was sought on how many houses had now been purchased off the open market by the Housing Department. It was noted that the records referred to one house being purchased up to January 2022; enquiries were made about the latest situation. The Language Advisor would verify the number.

## 5. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: LEADERSHIP TEAM AND LEGAL SERVICES

The report was submitted by the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director and the Head of Legal Service, and attention was drawn to the following main points, in brief:

- The Chief Executive reported upon the recent development as a result of changing the Council's use of Microsoft software so that it would be available completely through the medium of Welsh. It was noted that 60% of staff used it voluntarily; this would be changed to be mandatory from the commencement date of the new Council.
- It was noted that the Council led on a number of regional partnerships such as GwE, the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, North Wales Trunk Road Agency and the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, with the responsibility for establishing, organising and planning the meetings. It was added that the Council was volunteering to lead on the above as it was an opportunity to influence the language use of the bodies by ensuring that it was established through the medium of Welsh from the outset and implemented the Council's language policy.
- Reference was made to the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, which was attended by the Chief Executive, and that it was an opportunity to influence the use made of the Welsh language by other public organisations.
- Disappointment was expressed at some organisations where it was a battle to be able to contribute in Welsh in some meetings. It was noted that Welsh Government was one organisation where very little effort was made to provide an interpreter. It was suggested that the Council should correspond publicly with the Government to express its disappointment.
- The Corporate Director reported on the main fields under her leadership and she noted examples of trying to influence language use in those fields. Examples of this was always enquiring for Welsh copies of reports at every meeting and ensuring that the interpretation provision was available, particularly in on-line meetings.
- It was believed that the above examples encouraged others to ask the same questions and that an improvement could be seen compared with the situation ten years ago.
- Reference was made to the More than Just Words agenda, partnership work and collaboration within the care and community safety fields and the role of Director within Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board as an official contact. Details were given on the More than Just Words Forum, noting that national approval had been received for the forum's work in the North, which shared good practice and collaboration.
- The Corporate Director reported that she contributed in Welsh at every Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board meeting, as did a number of other members, and that this was encouraged and appreciated by the Chair and Chief Executive of the Health Board.
- Reference was made to the launch of Foster Wales, and the joint work done to

influence and manage to obtain the logo in Welsh first and in English second.

- The Head of Legal Service reported on the Legal Service, noting that it was a small service in terms of its size, but that it overlapped other Departments by providing legal and propriety support. Reference was made to the support being provided to the Coroner within the Legal Service, as well as the elections unit.
- It was highlighted that the Council was leading on regional matters, noting that the legal service had been contributing in terms of the governance of these matters. This meant that the service could give a prominent role to the Welsh language when establishing the regional partnerships and creating confidence that technical legal agreements could be produced in Welsh. It was added that the same status was now being given to Welsh and English legal documents, and that it was now uncommon not to receive bilingual versions of documents, which was a very encouraging development.
- Details were given on the Coroner service and the recent uncertainty regarding merging the service into a North Wales service. It was reported that the service would continue as a North West Wales service between Gwynedd and Anglesey where it would be easier to ensure the Welsh implementation of the service.
- Reference was made to the legal service's use of the external commissioning of work, and it was reported that this was inevitable at times. Reference was made to the challenges of getting hold of Welsh-speaking locums, emphasising that the aim was to appoint Welsh-speaking Solicitors. It was reported further that better packages were being offered during recruitment, in the hope of being able to attract more Welsh-speakers to the posts.

Members of the committee were given an opportunity to ask questions:

- Pride was expressed in what the Council was doing to lead the way for others and to create a bilingual workforce and gratitude was expressed for this work.
- Support was given to the idea of corresponding formally with the public bodies, particularly the Welsh Government, and possibly the Health Board, to express disappointment in their efforts to enable officers to contribute easily in Welsh at meetings. The above was supported unanimously by the Members.
- It was believed that the Council played a leading and important role in terms of ensuring respect to the Welsh language in regional and national forums, and gratitude was expressed for this work. It was added that it was very encouraging that the Council was taking on this responsibility.
- It was felt that a number of the public organisations were eager to create change and improve but were unsure how to develop bilingual language material in the workplace. It was questioned whether it was possible for Gwynedd Council to give them a work plan in order to assist them.
- It was agreed that the word 'Council' should be removed from the Council's name.
- The Corporate Director was thanked for all of her work; which was on top of her day-to-day work. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support reported that she had received feedback that this guidance from the Director in the context of the Welsh language gave others confidence and encouraged them to use the language.

- The Head of Legal Services was asked whether communication took place with Law Schools in Universities such as Cardiff or Liverpool in order to assist with the recruitment of Solicitors to the Council.
- It was asked in a situation where there would be any difference between the Welsh version and English version of a Legal document, which version would take priority?
- It was asked why English addresses were on the electoral roll and whether it was possible to receive the database in Welsh. It was expressed that similar matters existed within the Planning Department.
- The Legal service was praised for its developments in the context of the language in terms of developing new legal terminology in Welsh. It was acknowledged that it was difficult to attract Welsh solicitors; it was asked whether support was provided to locums to learn Welsh or develop their Welsh.

In response, the Chief Executive noted:

- That Gwynedd had led on the use of the Welsh language in the public sector for decades and that agencies, Councils and other bodies always looked at what Gwynedd Council was doing. This responsibility was welcomed and it was noted that it was essential for this good work to continue.
- An observation was made that the best translation service in the country existed in Gwynedd Council.
- Reference was made to the work being done to change the Council's name and that a number of bureaucratic legal obstructions had arisen over the years. It was reported, with the support of the Head of Legal Service, that an external solicitor had been commissioned to help and now the Chief Executive was confident that a significant change could be made.

In response, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor noted:

- That it was possible for Gwynedd Council to share examples of good practice with public organisations in order to assist them. It was added that the Government had established a new unit under the leadership of Jeremy Evas in order to give particular attention to the Welsh language. It was suggested that it would be an idea to send the letter previously referred to for the attention of the Minister and Jeremy Evas.

In response, the Head of Legal Service noted:

- That he tended to look for experienced people to recruit as Solicitors in the Council, instead of newly graduated applicants, except for the professional trainee opportunities.
- That there was bilingual legislation in Wales, which meant that neither language had a specific status. The importance of ensuring that the translation was correct, but that the interpretation was done by comparing and referring to both languages was noted; it was confirmed that both versions had a status.
- The electoral unit would look at the matter of English addresses on the electoral roll, in order to see what was possible.
- That it was a challenge for non Welsh-speaking locums to work for the Council, but that they had a positive attitude and a willingness to collaborate. Reference

was made to cases where the paperwork was in Welsh and that support and mentoring was provided for the locums. It was reported that the relationship was constructive and productive and that there was an understanding and appreciation of the language. It was noted that although the locums did not learn Welsh, that they certainly got acquainted with the Gwynedd Council principle.

## DECISION

- **To accept the report and note the observations received.**
- **It was agreed for the Chief Executive to write a letter to the Government on behalf of the Language Committee expressing concern that it was not always possible for Gwynedd Council staff and others to contribute in Welsh in virtual meetings arranged by the Welsh Government and to encourage them to ensure that simultaneous translation service provision is available without asking in virtual meetings.**

## 6. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: GWYNEDD CONSULTANCY DEPARTMENT

The report was submitted by the Head of Gwynedd Consultancy, noting that the Department was dealing with the engineering world, which was considered to be quite an English industry. This led to problems with recruiting staff with high standard language skills. It was noted that the Department was working on a number of projects and plans to help staff meet the language designations of their posts and to improve the linguistic skills of the workforce; details of these projects were available in the report. Reference was made to the following points in the report:

- The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officers were thanked for their work supporting the Department's staff to assess their own linguistic ability and to provide further training where needed.
- Reference was made to individuals within the Department who had made progress and were encouraged to speak Welsh as a result of schemes such as the Cynllun Cyfeillion or Cynllun Arfer via the University.
- It was noted that the Department encouraged teams to hold their conversations through the medium of Welsh. It was acknowledged that the lockdown period had disrupted this progress somewhat and it was intended to recommence the support for teams to use the Welsh language as the workforce's day-to-day language.
- It was emphasised that the Department would seek to extend their use of the Welsh language internally and with other bodies such as contractors and advisers further by corresponding in Welsh; it was believed that this showed an impact and had an influence.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and offer observations. During the discussion, the following matters were raised:

- Thanks was expressed for the presentation and for all of the Department's work. It was noted that the success of the Cynllun Adfer via the University was very interesting and it was asked whether other Councils and Organisations were aware of this and whether it could be marketed.
- It was asked whether the courses for staff to receive professional engineering qualifications being offered in Welsh, and if not, was there room to ask Coleg

Cymraeg Cenedlaethol for support to ensure that the courses were being offered bilingually. It was questioned what Education establishments were doing to assist the Department which sought to provide a Welsh workforce with relevant qualifications.

- A comment was made about the technical terminology associated with the field and it was suggested that it was possible to continue to have conversations about the work in Welsh, despite the fact that terminology used was in English. It was believed that it was important to discuss work in Welsh, whilst continuing to use the English technical terminology, in order to raise the confidence of staff.

In response, the Head of Gwynedd Consultancy noted:

- It was expressed that work was not being done by the Department to promote the Cynllun Adfer, but rather there was reporting back between the Council and the University. The Language Adviser added that the Language service was a part of the Management Board for this project. It was noted that it was a University research project, with the University leading on this with a number of other public bodies participating in the research. It was believed that the responsibility fell on the University to share the good practice and promote the success of the Scheme. It was reported that the direction of the work had taken a different path as a result of the pandemic and that no recent update had been received. It was reiterated that the Language service could ask for an update from the University and ask what were the plans to extend the scheme for the future. It was added that the feedback received from the University had been very positive.
- It was reported that progress could be seen where more courses were being offered through the medium of Welsh. It was also noted that the Department's staff were more prepared to ask for Welsh-medium courses. The tendency was that degree courses were normally in English and that BTEC courses were sometimes offered in Welsh. It was believed that it was an opportunity to more strongly persuade the Educational world and have more political persuasion on Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.
- It was agreed that the terminology associated with the engineering world was technical. It was noted that examples of successes could be seen; it was reported that 'cylchfan' was used today, however ten years ago 'roundabout' was most commonly used. It was believed that small things like this made a difference and extended the staff's vocabulary.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report and note the observations received.**

## **7. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT**

The report was presented by the Head of Economy and Community Department, and she referred briefly to the following main points:

- It was noted that a small reduction had been seen in the number of staff who had met the language designation of their posts, compared with the previous year. It was believed that this was a reflection of the increase in the number of temporary staff appointed over the past year, e.g. additional wardens in order to respond to the Covid situation.

- It was reported that opportunities had arisen to develop the language of those who did not meet the requirements. It was noted that individuals had taken advantage of the opportunities and had appreciated the support and encouragement given to develop their language skills. It was added that challenges existed when completing a language self-assessment as so many temporary seasonal staff were in the Department and some had now left.
- Some new service fields introduced during the Covid period were highlighted. Then, the opportunity was taken to place emphasis on providing the information in Welsh and promoting the services available in Welsh.
- It was reported that the Libraries and Archives Service were valuable resources for families which enabled children to hear the Welsh language and participate in activities. The importance of the Archives service which provided information packs and Welsh materials to Gwynedd Schools was emphasised; now there was an increased emphasis on this resource.
- Reference was made to the work of promoting Welsh culture that was being done by the Tourism, Marketing and Events Service. Reference was made to the work currently underway on the linguistic impact of the increasing number of tourists in the County. It was noted that measures were now in place to measure the impact on the language of the County.
- The Department's expectation on partners who collaborated with them to provide materials bilingually was expressed. It was added that the Department ensured that websites and apps were available bilingually, and they ensured that they were available in Welsh to other Counties and partnerships. It was reported that the Department had strengthened the language requirements as a condition in tenders when awarding contracts.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and offer observations. During the discussion, the following matters were raised:

- Gratitude was expressed for the full report and it was expressed, whilst acknowledging the magnitude of the task, that it would be interesting to see the outcome of the work on the impact of tourists on the language.
- Enquiries were made as to when this work would be published.
- It was noted that location played a part in how harmful tourism could be to the language in a specific area. This work was welcomed and it was believed that the results would be interesting.
- It was asked whether it was possible to measure how much tourism that the history, language and culture of Wales attract to Gwynedd and to Wales, i.e. more cultural tourism.
- Disappointment was expressed that the Arts Council did not support projects that promoted the use of the Welsh language.

In response, the Head of Economy and Community Department noted:

- That many factors contributed to the impact of tourists on the language and that it was not easy to analyse the impact. It was reported that this work had now been commissioned. It was believed that the results would be very interesting and that the Department would be happy to share the information with the Committee in

the next cycle.

- It was noted that work on the Visitor Economy Plan had been prepared and had received Cabinet approval to the consultation period. It was hoped that the consultation work would come to an end in June. It was anticipated that the Visitor Economy Plan would be approved after the summer. It was noted that the work on identifying measures was currently under-way and that the Department would have a better idea of the indicators by the summer.
- Members concurred with the comment that location was a factor in the impact of tourism on the language of a specific area. It was highlighted that if there were numerous Airbnb houses in villages then this could have a negative impact on the language, compared with the impact of tourists on larger towns.
- That no data existed to show how much tourism was attracted to the area based on culture alone. It was believed that this was a combination of factors, including the area's culture, environment and attractions. Instead, the plan that had been operational had been focusing on attempting to extend the season so that tourists visited throughout the year, and not just in the summer season. It was reported that this had a negative impact on the quality of the jobs and salaries being offered in the sector. It was added that Hafan y Môr now offered annual contracts, instead of seasonal contracts, so that the staff were paid throughout the year. It was reiterated that the Department was seeking to focus on cultural tourism that tended to visit outside the season, and was looking to strengthen the value of Welsh culture as an attraction in its own right.
- It was reported that the Arts Council had not been objecting projects, but it had rather been prioritising resources and had not been promoting. It was believed that this was an opportunity to influence; it was noted that the Department was collaborating and that it had already started to draw their attention to the opportunities which they were missing.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report and note the observations received.**

## **8. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF HUNANIAITH - GWYNEDD'S LANGUAGE INITIATIVE**

The Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor submitted the report. An overview was provided of the work and priorities of Hunaniaith, Gwynedd's Language Initiative. Reference was made to the report which detailed the initiative's various projects that were undertaken during the past year. Members were encouraged to watch the videos, with reference being made to the language awareness video; the links to the videos could be seen in the report.

Members were given the opportunity to ask further questions:

- Enquiries were made about the mindset of moving Hunaniaith away from the Council.
- Reference was made to the language awareness video created by the Hunaniaith team which referred to the seven important things about the History of Wales; the video was deemed to be excellent and a powerful resource. It was confirmed that a version of the video was also available with English subtitles.

It was explained that the strategic group was eager for Hunaniaith to be a more

independent entity from the Council and that this would have its advantages; it was noted that many other language initiatives were community initiatives. It was added that the future sustainability of the initiative would need to be ensured. An update would be provided to the Committee in the new term.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report and note the observations received.**

## **9. PRAISE AND COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The Language Advisor submitted the report, which noted the complaints and examples of successes experienced when promoting the use of the Welsh language in the Council.

Reference was made to the recent developments, including the language awareness sessions for Council staff that had recommenced virtually recently. These sessions would be run by the Language Advisor and Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer and had received very positive feedback; the sessions would continue and would be offered to more Departments across the Council.

Reference was made to the complaints, along with the recent adjudication following an investigation by the Welsh Language Commissioner with regards to the language requirements of the post of Chief Executive. It was reported that further actions had been taken, emphasising that this case or adjudication was not a reflection on the Council's usual arrangements. Details were given of the new conditions that were now in place as a part of the recruitment policy; those conditions would be added to the language policy. This meant that the language requirements would be noted clearly on every occasion.

A report was given on some recent enquiries; some of which were a part of broader national enquiries; further details could be seen in the report. Reference was also made to the three complaints received relating to the Council's language policy; one as a result of IT matters that were in the process of attempting to be resolved and further work that was in progress to address the matter. No complaint was relevant to the Council as the Council had no powers to enforce in respect of the language matters of private sector businesses. The final complaint regarding an English-only pamphlet received by the public had been resolved; arrangements were made to translate the pamphlet urgently as well as check and update further materials within the Department in question.

Members were given the opportunity to ask further questions:

- Attention was drawn to the fact that the same type of complaints and issues arose compared with other years.
- The members expressed their thanks for the report.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report and note the observations received.**

At the end of the meeting, members took the opportunity to extend the Committee's condolences to the family of Aled Roberts, Welsh Language Commissioner, as he had passed away recently.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.45am

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**CHAIR**

# Agenda Item 7

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>LANGUAGE COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>20 June 2022</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Gwynedd Council Annual Report on the implementation of Welsh Language Standards</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Gwenllian Williams</b> <b>Language Advisor</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Present the Annual Report to be approved by the Members</b>

## 1 BACKGROUND

1.1 As part of the Welsh Language Standards, as set by Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 the Council must “*produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the service delivery standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year*”.

1.2 The Standards set specific requirements for the content of the annual report (standards 158, 164 and 170) and asks us to include the following information:

- *the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the standards*
- *the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 151);*
- *the number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152);*
- *if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152);*
- *the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where –*
  - (i) Welsh language skills were essential,*
  - (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post,*
  - (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable, or*
  - (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary, (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154);*

1.3 Beyond this information, the Council is free to include any information that we feel is relevant and would help the public and the Language Commissioner to understand the work being done by the Council in relation to the standards and in promoting the use of Welsh language services, as well as information about specific steps taken to ensure compliance with the Standards.

1.4 As the Language Committee has a duty to oversee the implementation of the language standards, the attached report, for the year up to March 2021, is presented to the committee for their information, and for their approval to be published.

1.5 The final report will need to be published on the Council website by June 30 2022.

## **2. SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

2.1 The report includes key information about recruitment and staffing procedures, that ensures that the Council workforce continues to be able to provide a Welsh medium service proactively, and wherever it is needed across the Council. The key data includes:

- 99.1% of Council staff have some degree of Welsh language skills
- 91% of staff reach the language specification of their job (according to the assessments completed so far)
- 909 job adverts were published over the year where language skills were essential

2.2 Information is also included about developments during the year to improve compliance and to ensure the best bilingual service to the residents of Gwynedd, including:

- Establishing new procedures for hybrid meetings with simultaneous translation
- Establishing new self-assessment arrangements for departments in order to monitor compliance with the Standards, and annual reporting arrangements to the language Committee so that individual departments can report on efforts and activities to promote the language further.

2.3 The report also highlights some of the challenges that the Language and Scrutiny Unit, and services across the Council will be trying to address during the year to come in order to improve the bilingual provision and the Welsh active offer.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 Members are asked to:

- accept the content of the Annual Report,
- offer any observations on the matters contained within the report, and:
- approve the report to be published in line with the deadline of 30 June 2022.



**GWYNEDD COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WELSH**

**LANGUAGE STANDARDS**

**For the year 2021-22**

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**FOREWORD**

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  - 4.1 Standard 151: Reporting on the number of staff members who can speak Welsh
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  - 4.3 Standard 154: Reporting on job categorisation
  - 4.4 Reporting on language complaints

## **FOREWORD**

**by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Support in Gwynedd Council with responsibility for the Welsh Language**

**[to be added to the final draft]**

**DRAFT**

## SUMMARY



New procedures established for hybrid meetings with simultaneous translation

New self-assessment arrangements established for departments in order to monitor compliance with the Standards, and annual reporting arrangements to the language Committee so that individual departments can report on efforts and activities to promote the language further.



### Workforce language skills:

**99.1%** of Council staff have some degree of Welsh language skills

**91%** of staff reach the language specification of their job (according to the assessments completed so far)

**909** job adverts were published over the year where language skills were essential



## 1. Background - the duty of the Standards

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 establishes a legal framework that places a duty on the Council to comply with the standards in relation to the Welsh language. The individual standards explain how organisations are expected to use the Welsh language in different situations.

The duties that derive from the standards mean that the Council should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language in Wales, and the Council should promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use it in their everyday lives).

The Language Standards are divided into five fields:

- service delivery
- policy making
- action
- promotion
- record keeping

This Council received a compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner under Section 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, on 30 September 2015. This notice specified the precise standards the Council is required to comply with and on 30 March 2016, 147 standards came into effect, with four promotion standards coming into effect on 30 March 2017.

The Standards that the Council must comply with in their entirety, along with a copy of the Council's current Language Policy, can be viewed by going onto the Standards and Policy section of the corporate website:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Strategies-and-policies/Language-and-equality/Welsh-Language-Standards-and-Policy.aspx>

## 2. Ensuring Compliance with the Standards

The Council's Language Policy is its main method of acting in accordance with the Language Standards and ensuring Welsh-medium services for the people of Gwynedd.

The current Language Policy was adopted in 2016 and follows the principle that Welsh and English should be treated equally in the delivery of services, that the language choice of individuals should be respected, and that every opportunity should be taken to promote the Welsh language beyond providing a bilingual service and be proactive in giving the Welsh language a prominent platform.

The vast majority of Council staff are able to speak Welsh, and a large number have fluent Welsh language skills, which means that the use of Welsh as the language of work is now natural practice, and we can proactively and by default provide a Welsh language service. The need to consider the Welsh Language, and the Council's role in maintaining opportunities to use Welsh in our communities, is also a natural practice, and no service is planned and developed without considering the need to conduct them bilingually.

The language policy has been revised over the last year (there was a little delay with the time-schedule due to other pandemic priorities) and we hope that it will be adopted soon in 2022, once the new Council has been established. The Policy not only sets specific conditions to ensure that we respond to the requirements of the Standards, but also explains how the Council and its staff go beyond the requirements of the Standards and gives the Welsh Language prominence in all its work. This includes its continuous commitment to operate internally through the medium of Welsh and to ensure the proactive offer by providing through the medium of Welsh first, wherever this is possible. For example, the policy clauses that deal with meetings support the fundamental principle that meetings should be held in Welsh, with simultaneous translation facilities to enable non-Welsh speakers to fully participate, rather than providing translation to ensure the rights of Welsh speakers.

Several other measures have been made during the year to ensure compliance, including establishing a new self-assessment system, and there is a developmental programme underway that will seek to raise staff awareness of the Council's obligations, starting with the adoption of the amended Language Policy during the first quarter of the new Council. Further information regarding the developmental work completed in the next section the report.

### 3. Reflecting on the year - 2021-22

The challenges the Council faced during the year 2020-21 continued to a great extent in the year 2021-22, with the impact of the pandemic continuing to be felt, and staff and departments have worked hard to maintain services while responding to remote working and staffing challenges.

Once more, the fact that the Council has been able to secure the bilingual service throughout, is a clear indication of the success of the language policy, and of the way in which operating through the medium of the Welsh language is embedded in all the Council's work.

We now face a completely new way of working in the medium to long term, with many staff choosing to continue to work from home, and others returning to the offices. This creates a new situation for us to respond to, and consequently we have also had the opportunity to look at our monitoring arrangements, and how we inform and remind staff of their commitments in terms of the Welsh Language.

The Commissioner's new self-assessment system has also enabled us to take a step back and look at some of our processes. As a result, there are a number of plans being implemented.

See below a reflection on some of the challenges and successes over the year:

#### 3.1 Actions to strengthen compliance

- **Simultaneous translation and hybrid meetings** (Standards 23 - 33)

Last year we reported on the essential work of ensuring simultaneous translation in virtual meetings, and the Council's success in holding Council committee meetings completely bilingually throughout lockdown. We also reported on the challenge faced with some other public organisations who did not permit the use of Zoom software. This meant that the Council had to organise and provide simultaneous translation on behalf of others and/or this affected the right of individuals to use the Welsh Language in meetings as no translation service was available to non-Welsh speakers. These challenges have continued in 2021-22, however, the Council itself has managed to secure simultaneous translation in all public meeting where required, and has also managed to webcast several virtual live meetings, in both languages.

The obstacles with external meetings led to a call from Gwynedd Council's Language Committee on the Welsh Government to lead by example to promote the Welsh Language by offering meetings where it is possible to participate in Welsh or English by default, particularly as the technology enables this to be done with ease. Pressure was also placed to get the interpretation provision to work for Welsh and English languages within Microsoft Teams.

An additional challenge was introduced during 2021-22, as a result of longer term changes in our ways of working. A need was identified to develop the ability to hold hybrid meetings, with simultaneous translation provision, that would ensure that individuals who attend the Chamber in person or join a meeting remotely can participate easily, and are able to get access to a simultaneous translation service where necessary.

It was a challenge that took more time than expected as a result of the need to continue with Covid measures and remote working for an extended period, as well as collaboration with a national company who are trying to provide a hybrid service (without interpretation!) to a large number of authorities and business across the world. Through the commitment of officers from the Democratic Service, Language and Translation unit, arrangements have been established for the main meeting chamber at the headquarters in Caernarfon, to allow easy remote access to ensure that it is possible for meetings to continue to be held in Welsh with translation support. There is further work to refine the service, looking at providing simultaneous translation from different rooms or by using mobile equipment as the next step.

- **Impact Assessment** (Standards 88-93)

Work continues to refine and improve the Council's impact assess arrangements across the fields where there are statutory responsibilities for impact assessment. It was previously reported that an integrated impact assessment tool was being developed regionally for equality, language and the socio-economic duty. The Council has been developing a digital assessment based on this integrated assessment, and has also established a new system of submitting the assessments to the Council's Cabinet.

The Welsh language is a fundamental part of the priorities and service provision of the Council. No decision are made on changes to services, or on developing strategic plans, without the Welsh language and providing opportunities to use the Welsh language being a fundamental part of those plans.

We have seen an increase in the number of assessments submitted to the Cabinet, and that are being prepared for plans and projects, but there is still room for improvement, and we will work to raise awareness of the need to undertake timely and appropriate assessments over the next year.

- **Awarding grants policy** (Standard 94)

We have reviewed the Council's guidance on awarding grants during the year. By now, the Council does not allocate many grants directly (it is more likely to allocate money on behalf of other bodies such as the Welsh Government, and follows the conditions set out by those financiers), however, it was seen that general, clearer guidelines needed to be set for staff on the linguistic matters that need to be considered when allocating financial support. A policy document has been drafted, and an internal consultation has been carried out on its contents and implementation. This document will be shared officially with staff and the public as an appendix to the amended Language Policy during 2022.

- **Language Awareness** (Standards 132, 133)

A language awareness e-module is available to every member of staff and is included in the core training modules on the intranet. Every new member of staff will be referred to these core modules as part of the induction arrangements. We had not held face-to-face awareness sessions since before

the lockdown, and because of the changes in working patterns it was felt that there was a need to adapt training modules to be able to provide sessions on-line, via Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Officers from the Language and Scrutiny Unit and the Learning and Development team worked together during the year to adapt face-to-face training to on-line, trialling the new training with staff from the Test and Trace service. This face-to-face training will be targeted and tailored to specific services, and the e-module will continue to be promoted as part of the core training.

The Language and Scrutiny Unit and the Learning and Development team also contributed to national work during the year to develop a language awareness module for elected members.

- **Complaints Procedure** (Standards 156, 162, 168)

We will deal with any language complaints by following the corporate complaints procedure. Usually, the Language Advisers deal with any complaints regarding compliance with the Standards and Language Policy, to ensure consistency and effective monitoring, however, complaints can be received from individual departments, by the corporate complaints officer, or by the Language and Scrutiny Unit. In order to ensure that the arrangements are clear to the public, and that the procedures and accountability are clear to staff, a new document has been created and shared explaining the procedure for dealing with language complaints specifically, and how it links with the corporate procedure. The document has been created and will be published soon in 2022 on the Council's website.

- **Self-assessment arrangements**

During the year a new self-assessment form was introduced to the Council departments to improve ownership and awareness of the requirements of the Standards. The departments have to submit annual assessments to the Language and Scrutiny Unit, in order to assist them to identify gaps, to develop a programme of interventions, and to be able to respond effectively to the requirement for a corporate self-assessment by the Language Commissioner.

- **Intranet for staff and elected members**

During the year, new pages were developed on the Council's intranet - one for internal staff and one for elected members - to include information about everything associated with the language field. It will act as one central place where staff and elected members can find information about the Language Policy, the Standards, the Council's language strategy and get guidance and templates that may be used in their work. We hope that this source of information will raise awareness and will strengthen compliance with some standards by ensuring that information and guidance are accessible and available to all. The page on the staff intranet will also link to the equality page, and the language learning and development page, that includes further information regarding impact assessment arrangements and the wide support available to develop the workforce's language skills.

- **Language Page of the public website**

A specific page has also been created for the public website, that brings different elements and sources of information regarding the language together in one place. [The Welsh language \(welsh.gov\)](https://www.welsh.gov). We hope that this page will make it easier for the public to find information about the Council's priorities and obligations in terms of promoting the Welsh Language, and will develop as a source of information and resources on how to increase the use of Welsh within our communities.

- **Responding to collective correspondence** (Standard 4)

Work has started on reviewing the IT systems that send collective correspondence to the public to ensure, amongst other matters, that they are in compliance with the requirement in Standard 4. Several discussions have taken place during the year to understand exactly what some of the barriers are with IT systems, and where changes will be needed to ensure compliance. This work will continue in 2022.

- **Statements on documents** (Standards 7, 49, 50A)

Following the Commissioner's monitoring meeting, we set about to draft a number of templates for staff to use with documents, letters and e-mails, in order to comply with the requirements of standards 7, 49, 50A. The statements have been shared via e-mail, and they will also be available on the intranet for easy access by all, and reminders will also be shared regularly to increase the number of staff who use them.

- **Public use of services** (promoting services available in Welsh, standard 81)

In order to try and increase the use of services through the medium of Welsh we are collaborating on a First Contact Services project with our other partners in the public sector via the Welsh Language Sub-group of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board. The purpose of the project is to encourage the people of Gwynedd to speak Welsh when they come into reception areas (at the Council and other partners). A company was commissioned to create an assessment of the public's language choice when using services in 12 traditional receptions in Gwynedd and Anglesey and to look into possible interventions in order to encourage more people to use our services through the medium of Welsh. This work will continue in 2022.

### 3.2 Challenges in moving forward

A combination of factors have once again made this last year challenging. Adapting to new working arrangements presents a number of challenges in moving forward. Here is a summary of some of the specific matters we will address during next year to strengthen compliance and improve the Council's commitment to promote the Welsh Language.

- **Assessing the impact of large strategic schemes**

A number of large strategic schemes are currently being implemented by the Council and this contributes in several ways to sustaining the Welsh Language as a community language. These include schemes in the areas of Housing, Community Regeneration and Tourism. It will be essential that appropriate impact assessments are undertaken of these schemes as they are developed, but also that we develop measures and indicators that will enable us as a Council to monitor the impact and influence of these schemes as they are implemented, individually and jointly.

Considering how to incorporate these plans into the new language strategy will be a priority over the coming year.

- **IT Systems**

The increasing shift towards providing more on-line services means more challenges, especially when there is a need to buy-in specific systems. We have reported on these challenges many times to the Commissioner, and we continue to work to try and ensure the best provisions, which respond to the public's requirements and maintains the standards and requirements of the Council's Policy. We have also started the process of reviewing the Council's older systems, to ensure that the Welsh Language always has a prominent place, and that changes are made to improve the proactive offer as systems are renewed or re-commissioned.

- **Increasing staff skills and confidence**

One of the challenges we face is how the Council will be able to ensure effective opportunities to learn and practise Welsh language skills as the working model changes in the long term? As the Language Designations project moves to the next step, namely increasing the number of staff who complete the self-assessment, and supporting and monitoring the progress of learners or staff who have not yet attained the language designation of their posts, our attention will move from assessing to offering appropriate support to increasing confidence and developing skills.

As the situation with the pandemic improves, and the work pressure on our staff gradually reduces, we will need to give some attention to the language skills of staff in these services. The fact that a variety of courses and learning methods are now available is a great benefit when trying to address this challenge, as well as the ability to commission special courses. The courses organised over the last two years have offered valuable opportunities for us to assess what works for different cohorts

of staff. We hope to take advantage of this information to continue to organise suitable and effective courses for staff in the future.

We will also look at developing our Language Champion and Cyfeillion Cymraeg schemes, to ensure that informal support is available for staff within the departments to increase their use and develop their confidence. With many staff still working from home, the lack of informal opportunities for learners to practise their Welsh that was identified during lockdown, continues to exist to some extent, and we are aware that we need to look at new development opportunities, that fit into the new hybrid working model.

We will also be looking at how we can support Managers with matters such as holding internal language meetings and support new non-Welsh speaking staff to take a full part in meetings and to develop their understanding. This will include developing guidance on holding bilingual meetings effectively.

- **Recruitment**

A new arrangement was established during the year where every department within the Council takes it in turn to submit a report to the Language Committee on the implementation of the Standards and their efforts to boost and promote the Welsh Language. Several departments reported recruitment difficulties and the fact that it was getting more difficult to recruit Welsh speakers to posts. This is obviously a concern in terms of the Standards, as the lack of staff with the appropriate language skills is a risk to our ability to provide default Welsh medium services. There were some expected work fields amongst those that were highlighted, such as the care workforce, but gaps were also identified in more specialist fields - engineers, environmental officers etc. - and we will need to ensure that this matter is addressed during the year as part of the Council's plans on workforce development.

## 4. REPORTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF STANDARD 170

### 4.1 Standard 151: Reporting on the number of staff members who can speak Welsh

We continue to use our new Language Skills System to collect our data, which gives us a better analysis of the skills our employees have. The information gathered by the system answers two main questions:

	Question	Answer
1	Does the member of staff meet the requirements of his/her post?	Yes / No
2	What is the member of staff's language level for Listening and Speaking, Reading and Understanding, and Writing?	No Skills, Entry, Basic, Intermediate, Higher, Proficiency

The information for **question 1** is gathered in two ways:

- **by Line Managers:** during meetings with managers across the Council, we ask them to note whether or not, in their opinion, their staff meet the language requirements of their posts.
- **through staff self-assessments:** staff complete a questionnaire which, based on their responses to the questions, calculates their level for Listening and Speaking, Reading and Understanding, and Writing. Those levels are compared with the Language Specifications of the post, and on this basis it is calculated whether or not the member of staff meets the requirements of their post.

The information for **question 2** is gathered through staff self-assessments.

The task of collecting the assessments is ongoing, so we report only on the number of staff who have been assessed. Therefore, this number will increase and change as we continue with the work over the next year.

As we gather more and more assessments, the system's ability to provide us with valuable information increases, and we can now begin to identify patterns by analysing the responses to the language self-assessment. For example, if a number of staff from one service is seen to be requesting language improvement courses, this can be responded to proactively.

**All information is automatically gathered on the Language Skills System, enabling us to produce live reports at any time.** The data recording element of the system is in place and operational, but we are continuing to develop reports that will produce the most useful data.

#### NOTE:

- **Every post** within the Council has now been verified to ensure that the language designation is correct for the post and continue to be reviewed regularly.
- **Every new post** has to follow a specific system to impose the correct language specification.
- **Every post** includes *essential* language requirements, i.e. some element of language skills are required for each post in the Council.

- The work of gathering information about individuals (staff members) is ongoing work, and the figures noted will never completely reflect the actual number of staff employed by the Council. However, it is aimed to obtain the most accurately correct picture of the workforce's skills at any time. Staff turnover, changes in jobs, restructuring and individuals who hold more than one job within the Council are all factors that affect data accuracy.
- We do not report on staff who are part of the following departments (although they are employed by the Council) - **GwE, North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, North Wales Economic Ambition Board** - as they are all joint-committees and are therefore not accountable to the requirements of the Standards. We do not include school staff in our data either, as they are appointed directly by the schools or leisure centre staff as they come under the arm's length company, Byw'n Iach. However, both these services participate in the project, and undertake a self-assessment. There is also a requirement to assess and monitor skills that is part of the Byw'n Iach contractual commitment with the Council.

### Skills Report:

The following information is correct at the time of writing the report and is extracted from our Language Skills System.

#### Overview of the situation

<b>Number of staff members (on the Council's payroll)*</b>	<b>3822</b>	
<b>Total assessments gathered</b> (Line Manager Assessments and Self-assessments)	<b>2825</b>	74%
<b>Number of Self-assessments gathered only (Question 2)*</b>	<b>2633</b>	69%

\*does not include staff from GwE, Trunk Road Agent, Byw'n Iach, North Wales Economic Ambition Board or Gwynedd schools' staff

#### Staff and Language Designations:

<b>Staff who reach the Language Designations of their post</b>	<b>2584</b>	91%
<b>Staff who do not reach the Language Specification of their post</b>	<b>241</b>	9%

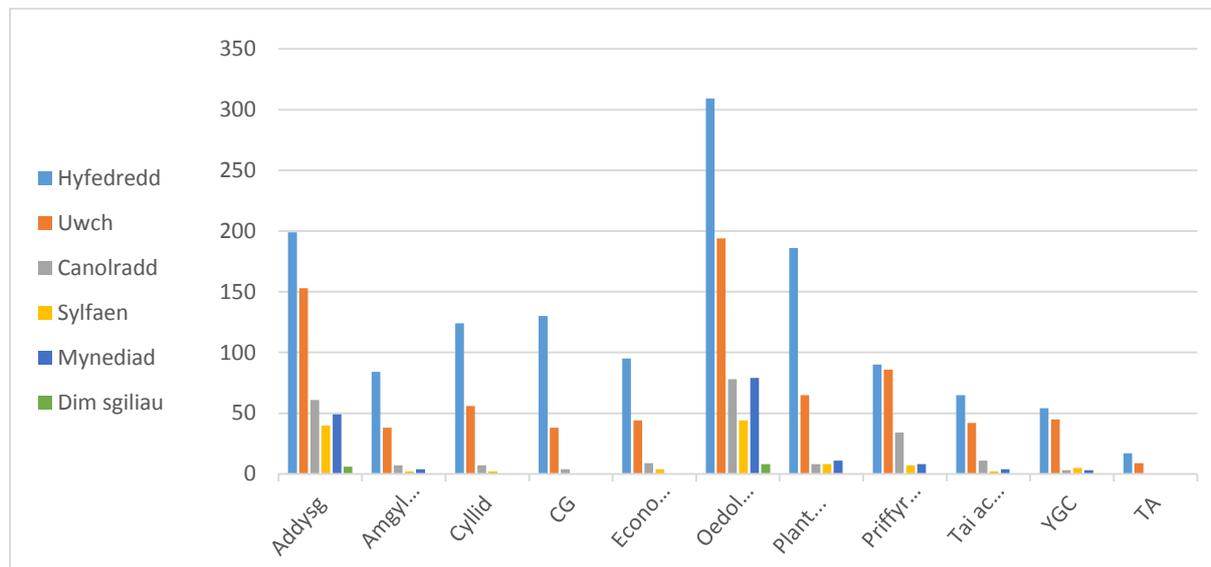
#### Overview of language Levels of staff:

<b>Staff who possess Welsh language skills (of any kind)</b>	<b>2799</b>	99.1%
<b>Staff with no Welsh language skills at all</b>	<b>26</b>	0.9%

## Language Levels of staff per department:

The following graph illustrates the language skills of the workforce as currently assessed. It can be seen that the majority of the workforce possess Higher or Proficiency skills.

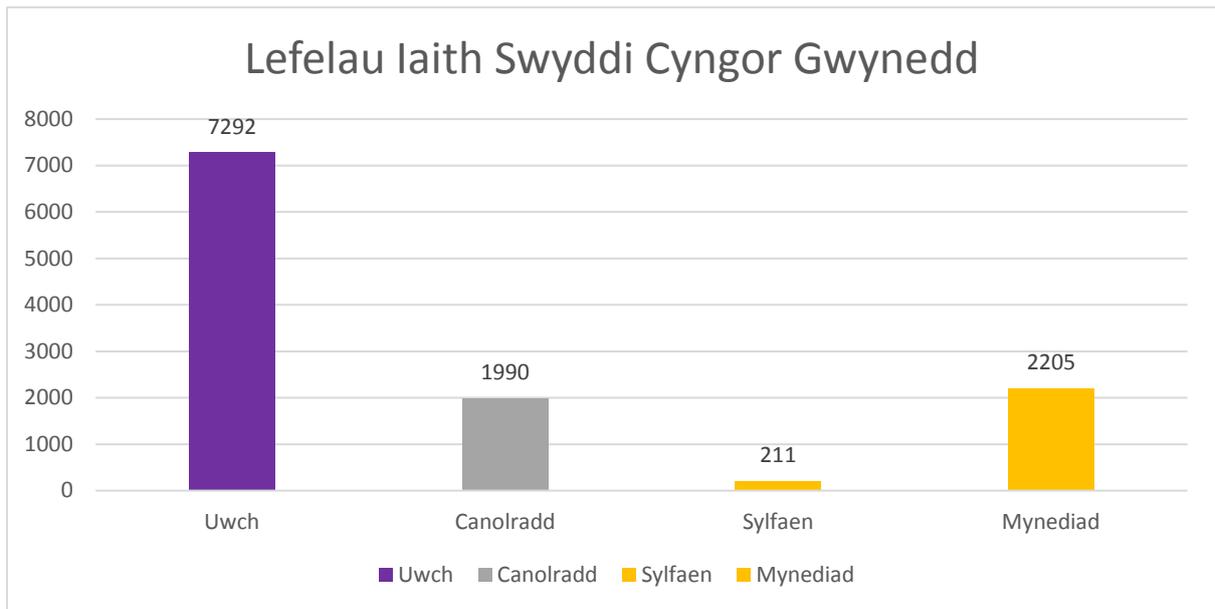
\*For convenience, the names of the departments have been abbreviated in the graph below. Their names can be seen in full on the next page.



	Education (not including schools)	Environment	Finance	Corporate Support	Economy and Community	Adults, Health and Well-being	Children and Supporting Families	Highways and Municipal	Housing and Property	Gwynedd Consultancy (YGC)	Corporate Leadership Team
<b>Proficiency</b>	199	84	124	130	95	309	186	90	65	54	17
<b>Higher</b>	153	38	56	38	44	194	65	86	42	45	9
<b>Intermediate</b>	61	7	7	4	9	78	8	34	11	3	0
<b>Basic</b>	40	2	2	0	4	44	8	7	2	5	0
<b>Entry</b>	49	4	0	0	0	79	11	8	4	3	0
<b>No skills</b>	6	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0

## Language Levels of posts - number of posts across the Council that have been designated per level:

The requirement levels of one job can vary from one skill to another, i.e. the Speaking and Listening level requirements may be higher than the Written level requirements. As a result, we count the Speaking and Listening level as the 'main level' for the purpose of reporting on post levels as this is normally the highest level.



We can also look at this analysis on a department level, and this enables us to see the jobs where the lower levels have been identified. A number of jobs in the Highways department, for example, are ones where higher skills in Welsh are not required because there is less direct and face-to-face contact with the public. We can take a sample of these posts at any time and verify the post's designation.

## 5.2 Standard 152: Reporting on the number of staff who attended Welsh-medium training

You must keep a record, for each financial year of — (a) the number of members of staff who attended training courses offered by you in Welsh (in accordance with standard 128), and (b) if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you in accordance with standard 128, the percentage of the total number of staff who attended that version of the course.

**Standard 128:** You must provide training in Welsh in the following areas, if you provide such training in English —

- (a) recruitment and interviewing;
- (b) performance management;
- (c) complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- (d) induction;
- (e) dealing with the public; and
- (f) health and safety.

All the Council's central training programme is provided in Welsh. A Welsh and English version of some courses are provided separately where there is a demand, but normally we seek to ensure that all training is Welsh-medium or bilingual.

English-only training will be offered when training is required in specialist fields, and the services of specialist trainers bought in. Even then, every effort will be made when commissioning services to obtain bilingual materials, and every opportunity will be taken to attempt to influence national providers.

### General Training

The information below is noted for each department within the Council  
ALL DEPARTMENTS (except Byw'n Iach, Trunk Road Agent, GwE, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Consortium, North Wales Bibliographic Unit, Councillors)

Number of individual events - **972**

Number of titles – individual courses (level of Post/Organisation) - **180**

TRAINING EVENTS	NUMBER	UNIQUE ATTENDEES
Welsh	524	1612
English	402	1032
Bilingual	46	159

### The change since 2019:

	NUMBER OF EVENTS			NUMBER OF ATTENDEES		
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Welsh	463	289	524	1805	1044	1612
English	225	305	402	1021	796	1032
Bilingual	222	92	46	765	453	159

Comparing these figures with what was reported in 2020-21, we can see that more training sessions were held during the year, and that a greater number of Welsh medium sessions were held. The numbers have returned to something similar to the levels reported in the 2019-20 report. The number of attendees (staff members) who have chosen Welsh medium training has also increased during the year, but it is not as high as the number reported in 2019-20. We will be discussing these figures with the Learning and Development team to see what encouragement can be given to staff to choose the Welsh medium courses, and how we can take advantage of the change to holding more sessions on-line to conduct training sessions in Welsh with translation facilities, and reducing the number of English only sessions offered.

**Standard 128 –**

**68 INDIVIDUALS ATTENDED THE INDUCTION WORKSHOP IN THE PERIOD 01.04.21 - 31.03.22**

(9 events were held - 1 of these specifically for Trunk Road staff)

105 received it in Welsh (91%)

11 received it in English (9%)

Recently we decided to hold the Croeso workshops on Zoom to ensure translation provision for those who need it. This means that there is no need to hold 'corporate' sessions in English-only.

**Training provided by the Council for the BYW'N IACH Service by the central learning and development service:**

Number of individual events between 01.04.21 and 31.03.22 – **39**

Number of titles between 01.04.21 and 31.03.22 - **11**

TRAINING EVENTS	NUMBER	UNIQUE ATTENDEES
Welsh	21	29
English	15	40
Bilingual	3	3

### 5.3 Standard 154: Reporting on job categorisation

*You must keep a record, in relation to each financial year of the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised (in accordance with standard 136) as posts where—*

- (a) Welsh language skills are essential;*
- (b) Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed to the post;*
- (c) Welsh language skills are desirable; or*
- (ch) Welsh language skills are not necessary.*

Welsh language skills are essential	909
Welsh language skills need to be learnt when appointed to the post	0
Welsh language skills are desirable	0
Welsh language skills are not necessary	0

Every post advertised by the Council includes the ability to speak Welsh as an **essential** skill.

Every post is advertised with a statement that notes that Welsh is the Council's operational language, and applicants will need to possess language skills that have been noted in the job description (i.e. that Welsh language skills are essential). The exact level of oral, written and reading and comprehension skills needed are noted in the Person Specification for the post.

If it is not possible to appoint someone with the correct skills after advertising once, managers can request for the wording of the statement to be adapted to encourage new applicants and to allow the appointment of someone that has not yet met the requirements, but who are willing to commit to learn. It will be possible to include a clause within a contract to note the commitment and a training programme will be agreed jointly with the manager and the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer. The language designation of the post **will not** be amended, therefore the above requirement that the Welsh Language is essential for each post will continue.

The new posts system has been developed and launched towards the end of the year, and officers in the Language and Scrutiny Unit and the Learning and Development Team (who are responsible for the language designations project), have collaborated with the project officers to ensure that specific questions are built into the system to enable us to analyse more detailed information about linguistic considerations within the future recruitment process. This will include information about how many jobs are advertised on the different language levels.

## 5.4 Reporting on language complaints

*The number of complaints you received during the year that related to your compliance with the operating standards with which you had a duty to comply.*

In accordance with the Council's accountability and internal reporting arrangements, any complaints or enquiries about services received in relation to the Standards or the Council's Language Policy will be recorded by the Language and Scrutiny Unit, and reported to the Council's Language Committee. A full report was provided on complaints for the year March 2021 to March 2022 to the April 2022 meeting of the Language Committee.

### **Number of pre-investigation enquiries received, or required actions sent by the Welsh Language Commissioner: 3**

#### **Training for election officers:**

An enquiry was received by the Commissioner about training for polling station officers. They had received a complaint from a member of the public about a lack of Welsh language training. It was possible to confirm that the training was not part of the Council's responsibility. The training comes under the role of the Returning Officer, and therefore does not come under the requirements of the Standards. This response, and the role of the Returning Officer being independent of the Council, was accepted and therefore did not lead to an investigation.

#### **Libraries' Self-service:**

An enquiry was received in February 2022 about the Library service's use of photocopiers and printers. The Commissioner's office wanted to know how these machines were used by the public and whether the software on them was available in Welsh. A response was sent confirming that the photocopiers were available for public use, but did not operate as self-service, and that they had to be operated by a member of staff. They did not therefore come under the Standards' requirements for self-service machines.

#### **Monitoring Compliance**

A monitoring meeting was held with the Commissioner's liaison officer in January 2022. This followed the completion of a corporate self-assessment exercise in the summer of 2021. The Council have been given a number of actions following the meeting, to improve compliance with the Standards. The Language Unit have also begun a new self-assessment process within the Council, with a departmental self-assessment being shared with all heads of departments that will feed into our next corporate self-assessment in the summer. These self-assessments will enable us to identify gaps and areas for improvement more effectively.

#### **Investigations completed by the Welsh Language Commissioner during th year: 1**

##### **1. Investigation CS018 – Advertisement for the Post of Chief Executive**

**It was judged that the Council had failed to comply with Standards 136A and 137 in advertising for the post of Chief Executive.**

The investigation was relating to the advertisement of the post of Chief Executive, and the fact that the Council had not included details of language requirements in the advertisement, and had not invited applicants to submit applications in Welsh.

The requirements of the Standards mean that all job advertisements must state whether language requirements are essential, desirable or that there is a need to learn when appointed.

A principle has already been set within the Council's Language Policy and Recruitment Policy that Welsh language skills are an essential requirement for all posts within the Council, and the Language Designations project has gone to great lengths to ensure that the exact level of language skills are set out in the Person Specification document.

This particular advertisement, however, followed a different procedure to the usual, and did not include Job Description and Person Specification documents as usual adverts do. A language designation for the post had been recorded in the jobs system, but had not been included in the advertisement. Also, although the information pack shared with potential applicants mentioned the Council's culture and operating principles, it did not explicitly state anywhere the need for Welsh language skills. It was believed that the reference to the culture of the Council and the county had made the need to be able to communicate in Welsh very clear.

The final ruling acknowledged that this post had been advertised in a different way to the usual, and that this occasion did not reflect the Council's normal procedures. The Council was, however, asked to make changes to the Recruitment Policy to note that any posts advertised through different methods would meet the same requirements and would ensure that the language requirements and invitation to submit applications in Welsh were clearly evident.

**COMPLAINTS and ENQUIRIES REGARDING A SERVICE OR RELATING TO THE COUNCIL'S LANGUAGE POLICY**

<b>Department</b>	<b>The number of complaints</b>	<b>The matter relating to the complaint</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>1</b>	A Council Tax letter using the English version of an address
<b>Economy</b>	<b>1</b>	A lack of use of the Welsh language by businesses
<b>Highways and Municipal</b>	<b>1</b>	An English-only leaflet was received by the public

## 1. Welsh Language Training Report 2021-22

### Introduction

Over the last two years, as a result of the shift from classroom-based learning to online distance learning, we have seen an increase in the number of individuals taking advantage of opportunities to learn or develop their Welsh. In general, the main reasons for this was:

- **no need to travel** - as a result, staff were able to spend more time in the workplace
- **availability of online resources**
- **flexibility in the arrangements**, in terms of type of courses and time
- **no geographical restrictions**, i.e. able to gain access to any course from anywhere

Here is an overview of the provision offered to staff to learn or develop their Welsh language skills during 2021-2022:

- Community-based courses over an academic year (online weekly lessons)
- 1:1 individual sessions with external tutors
- Intensive courses (a week or more)
- Online self-study courses, e.g. *Entry level Self-study*, *Work Welsh Induction* and *Improving Work Welsh*
- Work Welsh courses (online)
- Specially-commissioned courses on various levels
- Internal Welsh Friends scheme

The new online Language Improvement course was piloted, to replace the traditional Language Improvement course in the classroom. After a successful pilot we hope to offer this course from September 2022 onwards. In the long term, we hope to expand the choice by offering training such as *Mutations* and *Using Welsh Technology*.

### Some of the year's highlights

#### **The success of a learner from the Adults, Health and Well-being department and Byw'n Iach**

An individual who works for the Adults, Health and Well-being department and also for the Byw'n Iach company has been attending commission lessons at an Intermediate level since May 2020. Previously it was difficult to find lessons available in a convenient location or at a suitable time of day for her to attend. Since the start of lessons in 2020 her confidence to use the language has grown tremendously, and she has been praised by her managers and several members of the public for her willingness to use Welsh at work. Some have pointed out that they are learning more Welsh because of her. The individual was nominated for the 2022 Caring in Welsh Award (Social Care Wales) and was shortlisted. Her commitment and attitude to learning Welsh is to be praised highly.

#### **Commissioned courses**

Following the successes of the 2020-21 commission courses, several special courses for our staff were also commissioned during 2021-22. Due to the diverse needs of our workforce, these courses allow for greater flexibility while also offering staff the opportunity to get to know each other better. Here are some examples of the courses organised:

Level	Course details	Number of participants	Additional information
Entry	Weekly, three-hour lessons over 15 weeks	6	This course was organised specifically for community care staff. We realized that many of these members of staff work shifts and cannot commit to a community or intensive course. As a result, a short 15 week course was commissioned to introduce the Welsh language, at a time and date to which attendees could commit. The course had to come to an end after December due to the increased workload that staff were facing because of Covid-19 and other reasons beyond our control. However, 3 of the attendees are now following a community course.
Intermediate Part 2	Weekly, three-hour lessons over 15 weeks	8	Due to the success of last year's Intermediate course for Byw'n Iach, Adults, Health and Well-being and Economy and Community staff a follow up course was arranged between March and June 2021, with a further course arranged from September 2021 to June 2022. At the end of the course, learners will complete the Intermediate level and will be offered the opportunity to sit an exam and/or continue to study an Advanced level course in September. We will also offer them central support through the Welsh Friends Scheme.
Language Improvement	Two five-hour sessions over two consecutive days	8	As well as organising courses for learners, we believe that maintaining the standard of our fluent Welsh speakers is as important. Following the success of a previous Language Improvement course organized through Working Welsh, a specific Language Improvement course was organized for staff from the Council's Housing and Property department.  Once again, it was great to see that staff were willing to commit time to maintaining and developing their Welsh language skills.
Confidence Building (Work Welsh)	Two hours a week for 14 weeks (+ 2 revision session)	7	After several individuals expressed an interest in a course to increase their confidence in using Welsh in the workplace, this course was organised in conjunction with Working Welsh and Canolfan Bedwyr. The individuals attended weekly lessons between September and December 2021 before going on to take the Language Skills Certificate examination in May 2022.  It was nice to be able to offer the individuals a qualification at the end of the course and we hope to be able to run the course again in September 2022.

### Work Welsh 'Use' Courses

These courses, held online by Nant Gwrtheyrn, have proved very popular with Council staff this year. They are 5-day intensive courses and are available from Intermediate to Proficiency level. 18 members of staff attended these courses between June 2021 and March 2022, with more continuing to show interest. It was encouraging to see that staff and managers are willing to prioritize language training, and that they clearly see the value of giving their time to develop these skills, for their own benefit but also for their services. It is clear that being able to attend a course like this online is much easier for staff, although some stated that they would have liked to have been able to attend a face-to-face class.

### Friends Scheme

Our Friends Scheme was launched in 2019 in order to support learners to use their new Welsh language skills in the workplace and continue to hone their ability in the language outside the classroom, in the company of fluent speakers across the organisation. The Scheme was also welcomed by a number of fluent speakers at the Council, as it provided an opportunity for them to support learners on their learning journey and offer support and lend an ear in an informal atmosphere.

It was not possible for some couples to continue meeting due to the pandemic and an increasing workload, but it is great to see that some have now resumed their meetings. By the end of March 2022 6 individuals were receiving support from 5 'Friends'. The opportunity to have informal conversations with other Council staff is proving invaluable to learners, with many appreciating the opportunity to practice and ask questions. We hope that these sessions will support their formal lessons and help them gain confidence. Here are some comments from a few of our 'Friends' about the progress of some individuals:

*"Her confidence to speak Welsh has improved tremendously - and we are discussing very diverse topics - everything from Japanese food to fairies!"*

*"She is now writing emails in Welsh and getting better."*

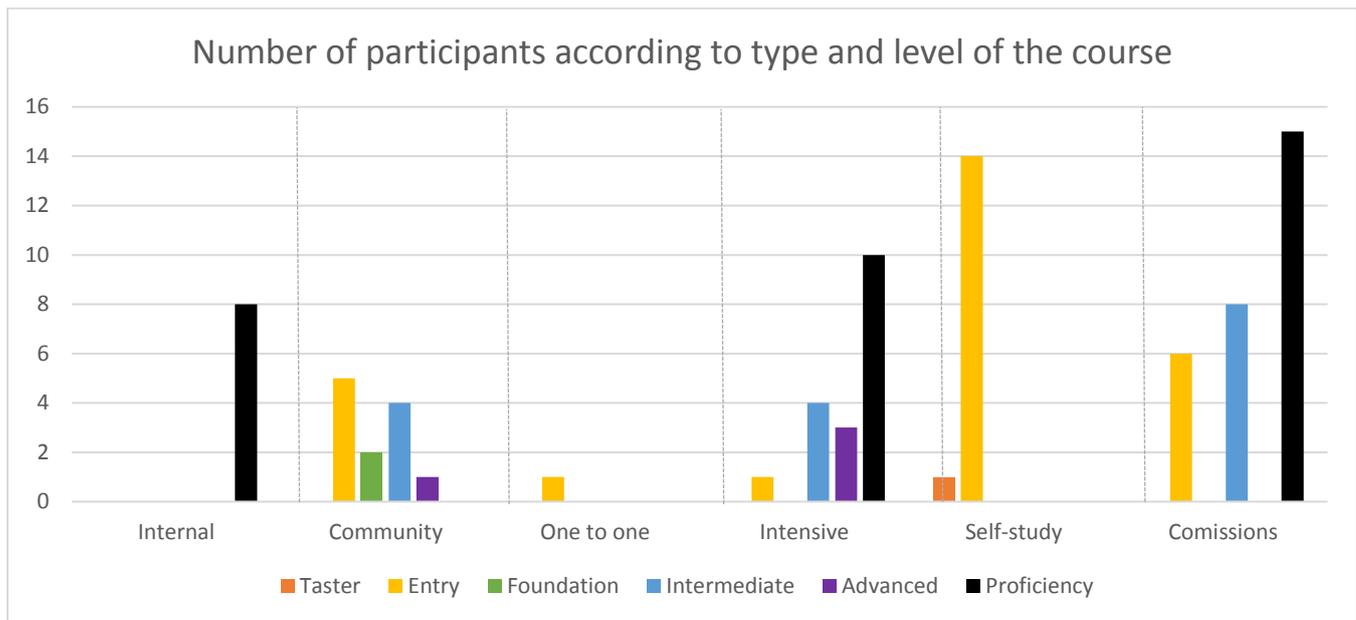
We will continue with the current arrangements and look for more Friends to support learners during the next year, whether online or face to face.

**The tables below provide more information about the language training held during the year 2021-22.**

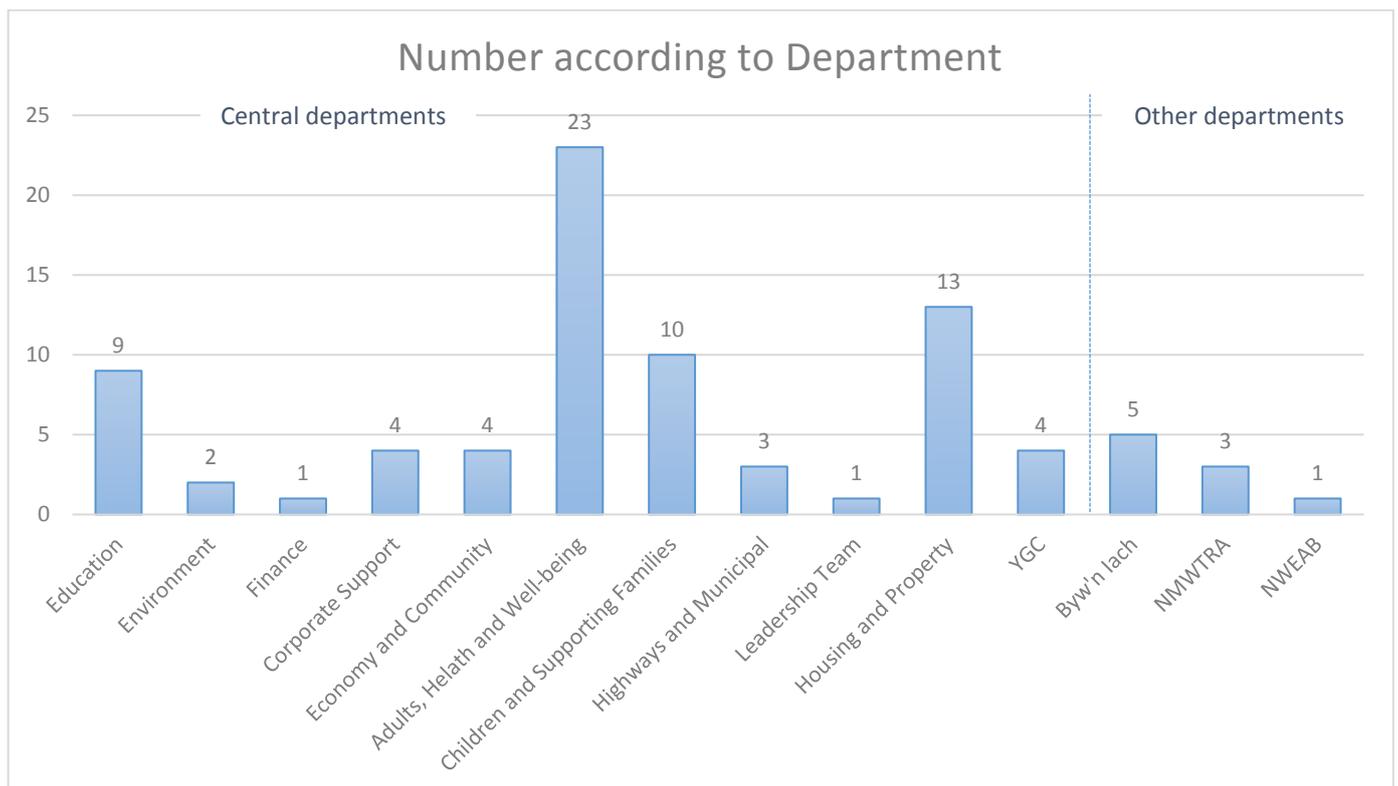
**NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO TYPE/TITLE OF COURSES**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Number of Individuals</b>
<b>In-house</b>	
Language Improvement	8
<b>External</b>	
Community Welsh Learning Courses	12
1:1 with an external tutor	1
Intensive courses	18
Online self-study courses (Work Welsh)	15
Various commissions	29
	83

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO TYPE AND LEVEL OF THE COURSE



These learners are divided across the Council's departments as follows:



# Agenda Item 8

<b>MEETING</b>	Language Committee
<b>DATE</b>	20/6/22
<b>TITLE</b>	Report of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To present information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in order to present information to the Language Committee on the contribution of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to the Language Policy.
- 1.2 The Council's Language Policy is embedded in all of the Department's work and we will highlight in this report the opportunities that are available to improve the provision for our residents, while acknowledging the challenges facing the field.
- 1.3 In 2016, the 'Follow-on Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care (More than just words)' was launched. The Framework sets expectations on local councils and health boards to provide Welsh medium services and to make an "Active Offer" to all. Being able to provide the "Active Offer" means that no one in Wales should have to make a request for a Welsh language service as the service should be available to them in Welsh without them having to ask.
- 1.4 The framework supports the Council's Language Policy and we as a Council have committed to More than just words from the outset when it was published in 2012, and we have welcomed the principles of the Follow-on Strategic Framework published in 2016. The clear advantage of the framework is that it is a national framework that ensures consistency across the country, and also across organisations in the field. The Council's officers have contributed regularly to the Regional forum that has been established by Morwena Edwards, Gwynedd Council Corporate Director, to collaborate and share good practice. Following a change to the Council's staffing structures and relevant posts within the Department, it will be necessary to review the Department and Council representation at the forum by the next forum.

## 2. RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

<p>A matter that the members wish to discuss:</p>	<p>Question</p>
<p><u>Boosting and promoting</u></p> <p>How do we go beyond the bilingual provision to increase the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language in the community, to contribute to the national target of creating a Million speakers, and to the Well-being goal of ensuring that the people of Gwynedd are "Able to live in a natural Welsh community"?</p> <p>Gwynedd's Welsh Language Promotion Plan can be seen here: <a href="https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Language-and-equality/Welsh-Language-Promotion-Plan-for-Gwynedd-2018-2023.pdf">https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Language-and-equality/Welsh-Language-Promotion-Plan-for-Gwynedd-2018-2023.pdf</a></p> <p>It sets priorities for the promotion of the Welsh language in five fields:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The language of the family</li> <li>2. The language of learning</li> <li>3. The language of work and services</li> <li>4. The language of the community</li> <li>5. Research and technology</li> </ol>	<p><b>1. Can you highlight any projects within your department that contribute to one of the priorities of the Council's language strategy, namely the Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd?</b></p> <p>The Adults Department is required to make a proactive offer to all who receive a service, ensuring that individuals receive a Service in the language of their choice without having to ask. This is an underlying principle of the Department's day-to-day work.</p> <p><b>Dementia</b></p> <p>It is vital that Adults with dementia are supported in their chosen language, and considerable research has proven the impact on individuals' well-being. By developing dementia units in the Council's Internal Care Homes, training staff to become dementia specialists, and continuing to offer Dementia Go sessions in Welsh across the County, this ensures a quality Welsh language service for individuals with dementia in their local communities. It is essential as we develop future technology/telecare options that Welsh language options are available, and this will be addressed as part of the Telecare Project during 2022/23.</p> <p><b>Out of County Cases</b></p> <p>Historically, individuals from Gwynedd have received a service outside Gwynedd for a variety of reasons, for example where the specialist care needed was not available in Gwynedd. This is especially true in the Learning Disabilities Service. Work is ongoing to identify our individuals who receive services outside of Gwynedd, and to discuss the possibility of returning to Gwynedd. There are examples where individuals want to return to Gwynedd to live, to be closer to family, and to work and receive a Welsh language service. This will be a priority over the period to come, to ensure that everyone who wants to live in a naturally Welsh speaking community has that opportunity.</p>

<p><u>Outsourcing of work and awarding third party contracts</u></p> <p>How do we ensure that the quality of the bilingual service is maintained when outsourcing work and awarding contracts?</p>	<p><b>2. If the department outsources work on contract, can you refer to any good practice, either when imposing conditions or when monitoring in order to ensure compliance with the linguistic conditions?</b></p> <p><b><u>Domiciliary Care Project</u></b></p> <p>Over recent months, work has been underway to re-examine the Domiciliary Care provision in Gwynedd. Providers will operate in a geographical catchment area and operate more flexibly according to the needs of Adults and their carers. As part of the project, we as a Department have been able to set specific linguistic conditions to ensure that the Welsh Language and the ability to make an interactive offer are a core element of the new contract with Providers. This has been a key element in the awarding of new contracts, and will remain a key element in the implementation of the new model and in our monitoring of contracts.</p> <p><b><u>Training</u></b></p> <p>Elements of Social Work training are often outsourced, especially when the training is in a specialist area. Historically, there has been a gap in specialist training through the medium of Welsh, but the Department's efforts over recent years have meant that Welsh language training is now an integral part of training contracts. Discussions are ongoing with partners such as Bangor University in order to provide bespoke, specialist training opportunities in the Welsh language.</p>
<p><u>Operating bilingually</u></p> <p>How do we manage to act on the requirements of the Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards?</p>	<p><b>3. Are there any obstructions that prevent you as a department from offering a full service in Welsh?</b></p> <p>This could be across the department or in specific services.</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment problems or a lack of staff skills</li> <li>• Work in a field that is considered to be an "English" industry (i.e. external influences)</li> <li>• Co-operate with external bodies and agencies that do not operate bilingually</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Recruitment</u></b></p> <p>Recruitment continues to be one of the main obstacles to enabling us to offer Services fully in Welsh. Recruitment to the care field is a national problem, and the problem is more evident in some areas of Gwynedd than others. When the Service makes every effort to recruit to front-line care jobs and fails, it is often necessary to compromise to be</p>

	<p>able to offer any type of service. Support is given to non-Welsh speaking staff and there are examples of non-Welsh speaking staff learning and becoming valued members of the Department with support. The Department has started recruiting locally (e.g. recruitment in the Maesgeirchen area for Plas Hedd Home), and this has enabled managers to discuss language needs and options with individuals who may not have previously made contact.</p> <p><b><u>Collaborating with Partners</u></b>          The Department works closely with the Health Board, and the Mental Health Team for example is an integrated team based with the Health Board at Hergest Unit, Bangor and at Ysbyty Alltwen. Every effort is made to influence partners and to work together to promote the Welsh language, but the work of the teams is often reactive. When there is an urgent need to respond to issues jointly with our partners, e.g. safeguarding issues, this is often a barrier.</p>
<p><u>Developing new opportunities</u></p>	<p><b><i>4. Do you have ideas about new ways we can promote the Welsh language in the county's communities - either in your own services or by collaborating with others?</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Community Resilience Project</u></b>          A project will be set up during 2022/23 through grant funding which will look at setting up hubs in various communities across the County. The intention is to offer preventative Services from the hubs, and by offering a service and opportunities to individuals locally in their communities, this will be a valuable opportunity to promote the Welsh language, especially in some of the communities where the number of Welsh speakers is lower. Would it be possible to work together to offer Welsh for Adults lessons in their local communities, for example?</p> <p><b><u>Insight App</u></b>          The Well-being Pathways team within the Learning Disabilities Service offers individuals with Learning Disabilities social, training, employment opportunities, etc. Over 150 individuals in Gwynedd have received a service from the team. By joining the Insight app, the team has been able to open up the opportunities to the rest of Wales, where individuals with Learning Disabilities across Wales can join the team's sessions virtually. There are not many Welsh language opportunities on the app, and the Well-being Pathways team is at the forefront of offering Welsh language sessions on the app. There are examples of individuals across Wales joining the team's sessions because they are conducted in Welsh, and individuals making friends across Wales. This is something that the team plans to expand on over the next year.</p>

	<p><b><u>Graduates/Trainees</u></b></p> <p>A particular effort is being made to target trainees and graduates for jobs that have historically been difficult to appoint. By offering courses in Welsh jointly with Bangor University, e.g. Occupational Therapy and Social Work, it is possible to try to attract graduates back to the County. In addition to the Occupational Therapy and Social Work trainee, the Department has appointed three Welsh speaking Leadership and Management trainees in recent years, and all three have returned to the area to work in Gwynedd. The hope is to grow future managers and leaders within the Department while promoting the Welsh language.</p>
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Meeting	Language Committee
Date	20 June 2022
Title	Report of the Children and Supporting Families Department on the implementation of the Language Policy and activities to promote the Welsh Language
Purpose	To submit information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy and how we attempt to promote the Welsh Language in our work.
Author	Marian Parry Hughes, Head of Children and Supporting Families

## Introduction.

1.1 This report is submitted to provide information about the contribution of the Children and Supporting Families Service to the Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd.

1.2 In 2016, the 'Follow-on Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care (More than just Words)' was launched. The Framework sets expectations on local councils and health boards to provide Welsh medium services and to make an "Active Offer" to all Welsh speakers. Being able to provide the "Active Offer" means that no one in Wales should have to make a request for a Welsh language service as the service should be available to them in Welsh without having to ask.

1.3 The framework supports the Council's Language Policy and the Council has committed to 'More Than Just Words' from the outset when it was published in 2012, and we have welcomed the principles of the Follow-on Strategic Framework published in 2016.

1.4 The following is the Service's response to members' questions:

<b><i>A matter that the members wish to discuss:</i></b>	Boosting and promoting
<b><i>1. Can you highlight any projects within your department that contribute to one of the Council's language strategy priorities, namely the Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd?</i></b>	
<b><i>1. <u>Language of the Family</u></i></b>	
<p><b>The language of the child care sector</b> - The Early Years Service collaborates with members of CWLWM (5 lead child care organisations in Wales) to promote and boost the Welsh language across care locations in Gwynedd, which are private nurseries, crèches, nursery groups, private childminders, after school clubs and so forth.</p> <p>There is a variety of resources, help and support available for promoting and using the Welsh language on the websites of lead bodies (Pacey, NDNA, Early Years Wales, Mudiad Meithrin and Cymru Kids' Clubs) and we promote and share these with local care settings and providers.</p> <p>Welsh Language Support Coordinators work for the 5 establishments which fall under the CWLWM umbrella, and every organisation works on different projects and offer support in order to promote the Welsh language and expand the number of Welsh language settings in Gwynedd.</p> <p>The work to promote the CAMAU plan <a href="https://dysqacymraeq.cymru/cymraeq-gwaith/camau/">https://dysqacymraeq.cymru/cymraeq-gwaith/camau/</a> to encourage the child care sector to use and improve their Welsh language skills continues.</p>	

Mudiad Meithrin have started a "Baby Steps into Welsh" podcast this year lead by Nia Parry, and we have supported the Mudiad by promoting it in Gwynedd.

The "Cynllun Croesi'r Bont" from Mudiad Meithrin continues, and the main purpose is the immersion of the Welsh language within the nursery groups and to increase language transition with Nursery classes in Welsh Schools. This year there are 11 groups in the county who receive support from the scheme.

The Early Years Service also offers grants of £100 to new private childminders who are non-Welsh speakers for buying Welsh language resources for the provision.

Bangor Language Initiative have held a workshop for parents and guardians with children under 3 years old to play traditional and creative games in Welsh. Ideas and advice are available on using simple Welsh in the games to practice and play in Welsh with your children.

**Parents' support** - The Early Years Service has collaborated with Mudiad Meithrin to conduct on-line 'clwb cwtsh' sessions.

The Family Support Team, Threshold Team and the Youth Service have all received training to provide 'Friends' parenting courses through the medium of Welsh, locally for different groups of children, young people and parents. We are proud that our involvement with this programme jointly with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service has led to the translation of resources into Welsh. This year, we have seen some teams move to using the Welsh resources of the FRIENDS programme in our groups.

**Support for vulnerable children / young people** - The Social Work Teams consider the language requirements of every child who receive care and support from us. Language is a factor in determining matters such as the contents of the care pack and the support needed by the family /child; care setting, fostering and/or adoption of any child. Of course, some of the children who come into our care have done so due to the serious risks they face and / or because of the complexities and the intensity of their care needs. At the time, out-of-county placements may be the only option for the child, however, when this happens the Social Worker will continue to address the child's language needs via Welsh medium visits and by ensuring resources (books etc) for them in their placement.

## **2. The Language of Learning.**

**Nursery Education** - The Early Years Service is responsible for leading on ensuring the provision of nursery education (10 hours a week for 3-year olds). All the education provision is through the medium of Welsh and immerses small children in the Welsh language from their first introduction to education. Gwynedd currently have 55 Nursery Education providers, who receive Early Years Teacher support from us.

**Flying Start Child Care** - The department is responsible for leading and ensuring provision of Flying Start Child Care (12.5 hours per week for 2-year-old children) for specific disadvantaged areas in Gwynedd. All the education provisions offer their service through the medium of Welsh and immerse small children in the Welsh language from their first introduction to education at 2 years old. There are 12 Flying Start Child Care settings in Gwynedd

**Youth Workers in Schools** - The Network of Youth Service Support Workers within the Youth Service provide informal learning opportunities and accreditations for young people through the medium of Welsh. The workers provide learning opportunities and the ability to gain accreditations via secondary and special schools, with a transition to social activities in the community.

**Duke of Edinburgh Award in Gwynedd** - One of the Youth Service's main accreditation programmes is the Duke of Edinburgh Award. It is the Youth Service that provides and administers the licence for Gwynedd secondary schools. We have ensured that all elements of the award here in Gwynedd are available through the medium of Welsh, through direct provision by ourselves and by commissioning the Urdd to lead on some elements. The Welsh language Duke of Edinburgh Award App has been introduced and is available for young people.

### **3. The Language of Work and Services.**

**Welsh Language Workforce** - 91% of the Department's workforce have achieved the language designation of their post. We also continue to encourage learning the language to those workforces who want to venture. We are very proud this year that Stephen Wood (the Youth Justice Service manager) has won the Learning and Using the Welsh Language Award in Dafydd Orwig's Memorial Awards for his success with the Welsh Language. Stephen said the following about his success

*'I was delighted to be nominated for the **Dafydd Orwig Award**, and winning it was a lovely surprise. I couldn't have achieved this without the support of my friends at the Youth Justice and the encouragement of my co-workers in the Children Services Management Team, thank you to everyone that helped.'*

**Welsh Language Services** - we take pride in the fact that we are able to report that all our services can provide through the medium of Welsh.

**Specialist Training and Developing Social Work Practice** The "Effective Child Protection" Programme is a project in the child protection field. It has developed a database of written, video and PowerPoint presentation resources that have been voiced-over for professional use. These resources have been developed in Welsh and English for regional and national use.

### **4. The Language of the Community**

**Youth Service** - All the social provision of the Youth Service is available through the medium of Welsh and the activities vary from gardening schemes, climbing clubs, graffiti and art workshops, cookery sessions within communities throughout the county.

During the year our 16-25 Years Old Youth Support Project succeeded to translate the 'FRIENDS' programme to Welsh to use it with local young people. The aim of this programme is to increase social and emotional skills, promote resilience, and prevent lifetime anxiety and depression, which is an integral part of the team's work. Young people have noted that participating in the programme through the medium of Welsh, their first language, has been positive for them in terms of their ability to take part and as a result of this in their personal development.

**Activities and Play** - The Department has led on establishing an Activities and Play Framework for children, young people and families across the Council's departments. To date, 24 activity providers have been approved on the framework and can provide play opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The Framework will be used to commission fun, creative, games and play activities for children and young people. Throughout the school holidays in 2020-21, and during the winter months the Department commissioned fun activities and play through the medium of Welsh throughout the county. Partners such as the William Mathias Music Centre, Sbarduno, Byw'n Iach, Dawns i Bawb, Leisa Mererid, Elfennau Gwylt, Urdd and Cimera provided a varied range of activities throughout the county for children under 5 and their families, primary age children and young people 11-25 old.

### **5. Research and Technology**

Recently, a Gwynedd Well-being Week was held, where over 50 local organisations came together to offer well-being activities for young people. The Service trialled new IT technology which was a 'Haia' platform as an innovative way of offering the service. 'Haia' is a hybrid events platform (combination of on-line and face to face activities) The Well-being Week and the Haia platform enabled us to offer the provision through the medium of Welsh. Using this platform helped us expand the activities, and reach young people, through the medium of Welsh.

The Department has been working with the Council's Well-being Team to develop an app for supporting young carers. the Ai Di App was launched in March and it's a convenient way for young carers to keep in touch with their school, and to use it in the community to receive discounts on activities and services.

***A matter that the members wish to discuss:***

Externalisation of work and awarding third party contracts

***2. If the department awards work externally on contract, can you refer to any good practice, either when imposing conditions or when monitoring in order to ensure compliance with the linguistic conditions?***

The Department includes language requirements on all / the majority of our 3rd party contracts and each contract is regularly monitored on behalf of the provider, between the Service Manager and the Manager. Some contracts dealing specifically with out-of-county placements to address profound care needs are driven by the very limited provision available across Britain. We have already referred to education matters through the medium of Welsh that derive from the need to place a child or young person in an out-of-county placement that meets with their care needs. At these times a decision has to be made on a suitable placement based on care needs and safeguarding as the main priority.

Our external contracts are very varied e.g. specialist care placement provision for a child, to offer support to young carers, to provide parenting services and early intervention on our behalf. We also collaborate with local providers to build specialisms in work to support children and families in order to ensure a Welsh medium provision e.g. counselling, and family mediation locally.

***A matter that the members wish to discuss:***

Operating bilingually

**3. Are there any obstructions that prevent you as a department to offer a full service in Welsh?**

**Recruitment** - Problems with the recruitment of qualified social workers is a cause of concern for the Department. In order to reduce the likelihood of having to recruit social workers who are non-Welsh speakers and/or use non-Welsh speaking social workers via an agency to ensure service provision, the department has proceeded to develop a Workforce Plan. Various recruitment campaigns have been held from the department through 'Gofalwn Cymru', and we have emphasised the importance of being able to speak Welsh to our service users, and the ability to live in natural Welsh communities as part of this recruitment pack.

**Meetings** - Collaboration through the medium of Welsh with partners can be challenging at times. This includes national, regional and local meetings with partners. A number of our partners do not offer translation / Welsh provision in virtual meetings. We have also not been able to hold some meetings bilingually as cyber safety could not be guaranteed to protect the discussions held / translated through a platform such as Zoom. We hold most of our multi-agency meetings bilingually, with the excellent support of the Council's Translation Unit.

**Provision / Placements beyond Gwynedd and Wales** - We have already referred to the limitations we have when securing an intensive needs out-of-county placement for a Gwynedd child. In the same manner, we are also concerned about the language needs of young offenders who receive a custodial sentence. As a Justice Service / Department we do not have any control over the sentence location designation, and a young person may go to any location throughout the UK that weakens the young person's contact with his family, language, culture. We have included this matter on our Departmental Risk Register as we believe that young people from Gwynedd are placed under a disadvantage in terms of their choice and use of their first language in prison.

**A matter that the members wish to discuss:**

Developing new opportunities

**4. Do you have ideas about new ways we can promote the Welsh language in the county's communities - either in your own services or by collaborating with others?**

The Department continues to promote and support the use of Welsh in each one of our services. Providing services to the communities of Gwynedd through the medium of Welsh is a priority.

We will continue to ensure that all our dealings with our partners are totally bilingual and promote the importance of using the language and language choice for the County's residents and by doing so influence practice in organisations outside the Council.

We will continue to encourage any member of staff in the service to attend courses to learn or refresh the language for the benefit of Gwynedd residents and we already adopt the practice of ensuring that staff who are learners use Welsh in meetings, either to introduce themselves or when introducing an item in order to build their confidence in a safe environment. We know that this pays dividends and the language develops through confidence and the support of colleagues.

# Agenda Item 10

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>LANGUAGE COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>20 June 2022</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Welsh Language Policy Revision</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Gwenllian Williams</b> <b>Language Advisor</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Present the revision of the Language Policy for the members of the Committee to discuss and approve to be moved on for the approval of the Cabinet</b>

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's statutory obligations in relation to the provision of Welsh Language services is defined under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards set on the Council by the Welsh language Commissioner as a result.
- 1.2 The current policy was written and approved in 2016 in response to the setting of the Welsh Language Standards. It was a way to answer the requirements set within the Standards to *"develop a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language"* (Standard 98) and to have a document that explains how the Council intends to comply with the different groups of standards (Standard 171 and others).
- 1.3 At the same time, the Council was eager to ensure that implementing the Standards would weaken the commitment that had been set in the previous language plan, and specifically so the commitment to having Welsh as the internal administrative language, to promote the use of the language, and to actively offering services in Welsh throughout the Council.
- 1.4 The Policy was therefore formed with the intention of explaining how the Council services will comply with the Standards while delivering services, and also to reflect the principles and the ambition of the Council for the Welsh language, and it's intention to operate in a manner that promotes the language.

## 2. The change to the Policy

- 2.1 During 2020, work started on reviewing the language policy. This was done as a result of the feeling that there had been significant changes in the way that the Council operates and delivers services since the last Policy was published in 2016.
- 2.2 There was a feeling that some sections of the policy did not give clear enough guidance to staff, and that it did not encompass all the scenarios that services deal with from day to day. There

were no specific clauses, for example, dealing with the way the Welsh language is used in IT systems. The changes to the recruitment process also needed to be reflected in the Policy.

2.3 We took advantage of this opportunity to conduct a thorough review of the policy. The changes that are being suggested here vary, from:

- small administrative changes
- creating new clauses
- providing guidance on specific areas that are not necessarily covered by the Standards
- creating new clauses that set out key principles to ensure that the Council makes the most of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language.

### 3. New clauses or sections

3.1 Some new clauses have been added to the Policy, as well as significant changes to some sections from the current policy. We summarise some of the changes here, for your information:

- **General principles** – these have been added at the beginning of every section as a short, clear explanation of the general aim. We ask you to consider these principles and if you agree with them.
- **Section 5 – Digital Services – website, aps and self-service** – this section has changed significantly in order to give staff better guidance about the use of the language in the different ways technology is used by the Council to deliver services.
- **Section 6 – Signs** – new clause added to reflect the commitment and the work of the welsh place names project to use and promote the Welsh versions of local place names.
- **Section 12 – advertising jobs and the recruitment process** – this section has been changed significantly. This section has already been presented to the language committee, but as it is one of the biggest changes to the policy, we draw your attention to it here as well.
- **Section 13 – Accountability** – explains who is answerable to the policy and what the responsibility of Elected Members, and members of the Language Committee is.

### 4. Next Steps

4.1 After being considered and discussed by the language committee, the policy will be presented to the Cabinet for approval.

4.2 Feedback from department heads will be considered, and any changes deemed necessary done to the document before presenting to the Cabinet.

4.3 Any comments or feedback from the language committee will also be considered by the officers, and any changes needed made to the document before presenting to the Cabinet.

### 5. Recommendation

Members of the committee are invited to comment on the content of the draft policy, and are asked to approve the next step of the process, which is to present the Policy – with any changes deemed necessary – to the Council Cabinet for approval.



## **GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY 2022**

### **DRAFFT**

#### **1. FOREWORD**

This Language Policy is published in accordance with Gwynedd Council's priorities and the requirements imposed on the Council under the Language Standards, Section 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The purpose of the policy is to note how the Council and its employees will plan and prepare to ensure that every service responds to the need of the local population from a language perspective. It will also ensure the Council's compliance with the Language Standards.

Helping people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh has been identified as one of Gwynedd Council's improvement priorities in the Council's Plan. That priority supports the Well-being Plan's aim to "live in a naturally Welsh society".

The Council is also committed through its promotion strategy - Gwynedd's Welsh Language Promotion Plan - to take proactive steps to promote the language and increase opportunities for the people of Gwynedd to use the Welsh language in all aspects of their lives.

#### **2. THE POLICY'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

By operating in accordance with this policy, therefore, the Council will seek to ensure that:

- The Council's entire workforce operates in accordance with the basic principle set out in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language.
- The Council's corporate identity reflects its commitment and the priority given to the Welsh language.
- Staff will take advantage of every opportunity to encourage and promote the use of Welsh among service users.

- The Welsh and English languages will be treated equally when providing services, ensuring that all residents of the county can use the Council's services through the medium of Welsh and English according to personal choice, and that decisive action is taken to ensure that the chosen language is noted and respected at all times.
- That services or activities that provide additional opportunities for people to use the Welsh language within their communities will be promoted appropriately and effectively.
- A responsibility is placed on **all** Council Officers and Members to promote the Welsh language in all aspects of their work.
- All external bodies are encouraged to communicate with the Council solely through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- Any external bodies or businesses that provide services on behalf of the Council are expected to do so in accordance with the Standards imposed on the Council itself. Clear expectations will be set out in service agreements and appropriate monitoring arrangements will be put in place and followed.
- Consideration of the impact of decisions and policies on the Welsh language and its use within the county's communities will be a key part of the Council's wider impact assessment arrangements. The Welsh language has not been identified as an Equality characteristic, but the Council nevertheless sees a close relationship between equality and language issues, the way we consider the impact and importance of Welsh language services and equality issues. The Well-being of Future Generations Act, and the local Well-being Plan, also give the Welsh language a key role when considering the well-being and sustainability of our communities. As a result, an impact assessment framework has been developed that encompasses all these areas - equality, well-being and language - ensuring that consideration of the importance of Welsh language services is mainstreamed within those arrangements.

### **3. THE POLICY - IMPLEMENTING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS IN THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL**

#### **SECTION 1. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE**

(Service Delivery Standards 1, 4, 5, 6, 7)

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

*We will respect the freedom of the individual/public to communicate with the Council in Welsh or English.*

*We will make every effort to record language choice, and to communicate in accordance with that choice.*

*We will encourage other individuals and organisations to use the Welsh language when communicating with us.*

- 1.1 Council staff should reply to all letters in the same language as originally written, and in accordance with the corporate letter-answering targets of acknowledging the correspondence within 7 working days and replying in full within 15 working days.
- 1.2 If there is a need to correspond (by e-mail or letter) after speaking to someone face to face or over the phone, any written correspondence should adhere to the language of choice in the original conversation, or the language chosen by the user if they have specifically expressed that they would like written information in a language other than their chosen spoken language.
- 1.3 All mass correspondence should be sent bilingually. This includes any letter that is sent to more than one person using the same template (they do not have to be sent at the same time) - such as replies to requests on the self-service system.
- 1.4 If letters are sent from a computer/self-service system where language choice is indicated and the information is personalised in some way, for example by using a case reference, these do not have to be sent bilingually and can be sent in the individual's language of choice.
- 1.5 When a member of staff commences correspondence with any individual, society or company in the form of a letter or e-mail, this correspondence should be written bilingually. An officer may write in Welsh only if he/she is certain that the recipient understands Welsh and wishes to receive correspondence in Welsh.
- 1.6 Council staff should always write to public bodies and devolved bodies in Wales **in Welsh only**.
- 1.7 If another body that is also subject to the Language Standards (in particular other local authorities and the Welsh Government) sends correspondence in English only, Council staff should request a Welsh copy of the correspondence before responding to the body in Welsh. If no Welsh correspondence is received upon request, the correspondence should be replied to in Welsh and the Language and Scrutiny Unit notified.

1.8 Council staff should include a statement on any correspondence noting that the public are welcome to communicate with them in Welsh and that communication in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

1.9 The accuracy of any correspondence being sent must be ensured. All of the Council's staff are encouraged to use the Welsh Windows interface and CySill and to use clear and simple language.

## **SECTION 2. TELEPHONE SERVICES**

(Service Delivery Standards 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*The Council will ensure that any enquiry can be dealt with fully in Welsh when the public contact by phone.*

2.1 The Council will ensure that any member of the public can receive a service through the medium of Welsh or English when contacting over the phone.

2.2 Every member of frontline staff and every automated electronic answering system - in the Council's headquarters, regional offices and other public spaces - will answer telephone calls bilingually (in Welsh first and then in English) and in a welcoming manner.

2.3 The Council will endeavour to ensure that all members of staff who receive telephone calls from the public will be able to greet the calls in Welsh.

2.4 If a member of the public calling wishes to have the matter dealt with in Welsh, but the officer who answers the call is unable to speak Welsh fluently enough to deal with the matter **in full**, the officer should explain this after greeting the caller, and offer to transfer the call to another member of staff who will be able to deal with the matter in full in the caller's chosen language. In cases where the officer who answers the call is a Welsh-learner, the officer is encouraged to use his/her Welsh to the best of his/her ability.

2.5 Messages on all the Council's answering machines will be bilingual, with the Welsh message heard first.

2.6 When a member of staff telephones a member of the public for the first time, the staff member will make sure that he/she is aware of the individual's language choice, making a note of this if necessary to ensure that any future telephone calls from the service will also be made in Welsh.

### **SECTION 3. MEETINGS - INCLUDING THE PUBLIC AND EXTERNAL STAFF**

(Standards 23, 25, 27, 27A, 27CH, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36)

#### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*Welsh is the Council's principal language of operation. All meetings arranged by Council staff will be conducted through the medium of Welsh.*

*Those attending Council meetings are encouraged to contribute in Welsh, but we will also respect and facilitate language choice.*

*The Council will arrange simultaneous translation where necessary to ensure that non-Welsh-speaking attendees are able to follow the meeting and participate fully.*

*In accordance with the Council's aim, it will try and ensure that bilingual staff are always available so as to conduct meetings according to the member of the public's language choice. As the vast majority of the Council's staff are bilingual, we should not find ourselves in a situation where the language of a meeting with a member of the public has to be changed to English.*

- 3.1 Officers should ensure that anyone who is invited to an **internal** Council meeting is aware that the Council's meetings are held through the medium of Welsh. They should be given an opportunity to specify whether they wish to contribute through the medium of Welsh or English and the Council's officers will have a duty to ensure that a translation service is available if needed, to ensure that the meeting is held through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.2 If a member of the public attends a meeting relating to **well-being** (i.e. any personal matters), and wishes to discuss those matters through the medium of Welsh, the meeting **must** be conducted according to the individual's language of choice.
- 3.3 Council officers must ensure that any staff (from the Council itself or any other body/agency) in attendance at well-being meetings are able to speak Welsh, and if not, that arrangements are in place to ensure that this has no bearing on the ability to conduct that meeting in Welsh if this is the individual's wish. The language of the meeting **MUST NOT** be changed for the benefit of the officers.
- 3.4 The Welsh language will be the main language of any **public** meetings held by the Council. When a public meeting, hearing or inquiry is organised by the Council, officers should conduct and lead the meeting through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.5 The public have the right to speak Welsh or English, as they choose, in any public meeting arranged by the Council, and a simultaneous translation service will be arranged to ensure that those who do not understand and speak Welsh are able to

understand and contribute effectively to the meeting.

- 3.6 Chairs or leading officers of any public meetings will be expected to draw attention to the simultaneous translation provision at the beginning of the meeting, and encourage attendees to use this equipment to promote language choice.
- 3.7 All documents relating to a public meeting are expected to be produced and published bilingually. It will also be necessary to ensure that all agendas, invitations or advertisements for the meeting include a statement noting that the public meeting will be conducted through the medium of Welsh and that a translation service will be available to those who wish to contribute and follow the meeting through the medium of English.
- 3.8 Council officers will be expected to contribute through the medium of Welsh at public meetings, committees or conferences arranged by other authorities or public organisations, and they are encouraged to ensure that the organisers offer a simultaneous translation provision to enable them to contribute if required.
- 3.9 Any activities or training undertaken by the Council for the public will be offered in Welsh only or bilingually with a simultaneous translation service. (Standard 84)

#### **SECTION 4 - PUBLICATIONS AND WRITTEN MATERIAL**

(Service Delivery Standards 38, 40, 48, 49, 50, 50A, 50B, 51, 52, 55, 56)

##### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*Welsh is the Council's principal language of operation, which means that Welsh is given priority when writing internal reports and documents.*

*All the Council's public documents - including reports, plans, posters, forms and explanatory material, press releases, public notices and consultation documents - will be available in Welsh and English.*

*Any official documents published on the Council's website will be available in both languages, with the ability to switch easily from one version to another.*

*The Council will not publish/distribute English-only documents, on paper or on the Council's website, unless a Welsh version is also available at the same time.*

*Every effort will be made to produce short documents bilingually, to ensure that the public see the Welsh language at every opportunity.*

- 4.1 Officers will ensure that any written material which is intended for the public, is

- available in Welsh and English. This includes printed written material and material that is shared electronically.
- 4.2 Any leaflets sent out to residents will be bilingual and placed in envelopes in a way that ensures that the Welsh language is seen first on opening.
  - 4.3 If Officers share written material from other organisations (either in the form of documents, or by reference to other sources such as websites) the Officers will be expected to make every effort to ensure that the material is available in Welsh as well as in English. If documents are shared as part of consultation work, and the external organisation is unable to provide bilingual copies, arrangements must be made for them to be translated in-house before the documents are made public.
  - 4.4 Officers should ensure that any written material is in a standard format and style, in Welsh and English, and that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably in terms of format, size, quality and clarity. This includes ensuring that any material is comprehensible and clear to the public, and follows the principles of Cymraeg Clir/ Plain English.
  - 4.5 Priority should be given to the Welsh language in any public written material. This means that the Welsh text will be placed either above or to the left of the English text.
  - 4.6 Any leaflets, pamphlets and documents that are publicly distributed should be designed as printed versions in such a way as to ensure that the two languages appear together. This can be bilingual text on the same page or a document with both languages printed back to back.
  - 4.7 Should the Council, for any reason (e.g. document size, website publication) have to publish Welsh and English versions separately, they will be published at the same time, and the English version will state clearly that a Welsh version is available to encourage residents to access the Welsh version.
  - 4.8 It should be ensured that any documents that are **printed** as separate Welsh and English paper versions are available together and that the Welsh version is offered first to the public.
  - 4.9 Any signs erected in any public space under the Council's responsibility will be bilingual, with Welsh appearing first, and English following underneath.
  - 4.10 We will also seek to ensure that any notices or posters by other organisations and companies displayed on Council premises are also in Welsh or are bilingual. English only posters shall not be displayed in Council buildings.
  - 4.11 Every statement by the Council to the press or media will be bilingual.
  - 4.12 Responses to enquiries from the press or media will be sent in Welsh or English, depending on the language of the reporter concerned.

- 4.13 All material used to raise awareness, market, promote and attract investment to the area will note and acknowledge the importance of the Welsh language.
- 4.14 Any marketing campaigns carried out by or on behalf of the Council will be fully bilingual, including exhibitions, information stalls and conferences. This means that any advertising, publishing or research work will be fully bilingual.
- 4.15 The following exceptions to the above clauses are allowed:
- a) A document that relates specifically to activities, the main purpose of which is to encourage and promote the Welsh language, and/or which relate to an event that supports the language and culture of the area. This may include events such as Urdd and National Eisteddfod activities or activities by partners in promoting the Welsh language.
  - b) Announcements or advertisements for radio or television programmes on Welsh language stations or channels.
  - c) Advertisements in the Welsh language press which will appear in Welsh only.
- 4.16 Any documents or announcements intended for an audience outside Wales, or advertisements for radio stations and television channels outside Wales, are expected to include some Welsh. As an attempt to promote the language as an integral part of the county's identity and culture, materials may not be published solely in English.
- 4.17 Advertisements and publicity on behalf of a third party which appear on Council property, land or buildings, are expected to follow the above guidelines. Where there is an agreement between the Council and another party for the use of Council property, land or buildings, a condition to this effect will be included in the agreement, including associated publicity (e.g. posters, advertisements).

## **SECTION 5 - DIGITAL SERVICES - WEBSITE, APPS AND SELF-SERVICE**

(Service Delivery Standards 56, 57, 58, 59, 60)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*The Council will seek to ensure that all apps and electronic systems it uses to provide services to the public are fully bilingual.*

*The Council will consider developing apps and systems of its own where possible, to ensure that they work completely bilingually, and that the Welsh language is given prominence.*

*Any written material published electronically will follow the guidelines noted for written material above.*

*Switching between the Welsh and English versions of the website pages will be easy, and statements will clearly indicate that a Welsh version is available if Welsh and English documents are published separately without the capacity to toggle.*

- 5.1 Any websites developed by the Council will give priority to the Welsh language, will navigate the user to the Welsh page as the default where possible, and will allow easy switching between the equivalent pages in Welsh and English.
- 5.2 Any social media accounts (such as Facebook and Twitter) will follow the guidelines available from the Communications Unit and present information bilingually, with Welsh appearing first every time.
- 5.3 Any response to messages or comments received on social media will be written in the same language, so all Welsh language comments will be replied to in Welsh.
- 5.4 Any forms or questionnaires offered by the Council through a self-service method will be in Welsh and English, with the individuals selecting their language of choice when registering for the service.
- 5.5 Any letters or responses to requests through the online self-service system will be sent in the language chosen by the user.
- 5.6 Any self-service machines used in service settings will operate fully bilingually, and if possible will offer Welsh as the first/default language.
- 5.7 When commissioning or purchasing new IT systems for use as part of providing a service to the public, the Council will seek to ensure equality of access for all, and will ensure that no additional steps are required to use the Welsh version, which would

mean that we treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

- 5.8 Should any Department or service within the Council commission/purchase new systems themselves for use as part of providing a service to the public, they will be expected to consult with the IT service, the Website team and the Language and Scrutiny Unit to ensure that the systems comply with the above requirements and are adequately tested prior to use.

## **SECTION 6 - SIGNAGE**

**(Service Delivery Standards 61, 62, 63, 141, 142, 143)**

- 6.1 All signs erected by the Council in a public place will be bilingual, with Welsh first. This includes signs placed in Council buildings and service settings and also public street/road signs.
- 6.2 Officers will be responsible for ensuring that the language and meaning are clear on any signs, posters, information notices.
- 6.3 The Council will ensure that any third party providers or contractors also use bilingual signs which follow the same principle of Welsh language prominence and accuracy.
- 6.4 The Council will undertake to use, to the best of its ability, Welsh names for locations and dwellings where English names also exist. New signs will be installed in Welsh only, and changes to old bilingual signs will be considered as appropriate, and when being replaced.

## **SECTION 7 - RECEPTION AREAS**

**(Service Delivery Standards 64, 67, 68, 69)**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

***The principle of the proactive offer will be followed and all frontline staff in Council reception areas will start the conversation in Welsh.***

- 7.1 The public will be able to receive a fully bilingual service in each of the Council's public reception areas. This means that all customer advisers and receptionists in library and school reception areas, etc. will be able to communicate bilingually.
- 7.2 Signs will be displayed in Council reception areas and any public service points to clearly indicate that a Welsh language service can be provided to encourage the public to use Welsh and to ensure that language choice is noted and respected.

- 7.3 Reception and public service point staff will be encouraged, where appropriate, to wear 'Cymraeg'/'Iaith Gwaith' badges or lanyards that will enable the public to identify the Welsh speakers or learners who can provide a Welsh-medium service for them.

## **SECTION 8 - GRANTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

(Service Delivery Standards 71, 72, 72A, 73, 75)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*The Council has a sub-policy to this Language Policy which sets out the expectations regarding the awarding of grants, and which meets the requirements of Standard 94. Staff will be expected to follow this sub-policy when considering any arrangements where grants or financial assistance are shared with the public.*

- 8.1 Any funding or grant from the Council is used as a public tool for promoting the use of the Welsh language locally. This could be by increasing the day-to-day spoken use of the Welsh language or by visually promoting the Welsh language.
- 8.2 Conditions for language use will be set within any grant agreements, depending on the nature of the grant and the activity being funded.
- 8.3 The Council will expect institutions, organisations, bodies and individuals providing services to the business community locally to do so bilingually, and in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and the Welsh Language Standards.
- 8.4 The Council will expect businesses that receive grants or financial assistance to make every effort to promote the Welsh language, to use it visually in the business, and to offer employment opportunities where Welsh language skills are recognised.
- 8.6 All correspondence relating to the allocation of grants or service tenders will be in Welsh and English.
- 8.7 All the processes involved in awarding grants and financial assistance will be conducted bilingually, and it will be possible for anyone to have a meeting or interview in the context of grants or financial assistance through the medium of Welsh. It will be the responsibility of Council officers to ensure that simultaneous translation is provided if needed.

## **SECTION 9 - PROCUREMENT AND TENDERING PROCESSES (JOINT PROVISION, COMMISSIONING AND OUTSOURCING OF SERVICES)**

(Service Delivery Standards 76, 77, 77A, 78, 80)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*Arrangements for joint-provision and joint-funding of services, as well as outsourcing of services, are increasingly used by the Council and are essential for the future. In developing structures and agreements with others, the Council will protect and secure the needs of the County's residents in terms of receiving bilingual services.*

*We will take advantage of every opportunity to raise awareness of the profile and importance of the Welsh language within the County among our joint-providers and to collaborate towards improved bilingual provision across all services.*

*Ensuring the rights of individuals to Welsh language services will form a core part of any work to outsource or set up an agreement for services.*

*We will follow the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on out-sourcing and contracting work=[c-gosod-contractau-gwasanaethau-cyhoeddus.pdf \(comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru\)](https://www.welshlanguage.gov.uk/comisiynyddygydraeg/cymru/c-gosod-contractau-gwasanaethau-cyhoeddus.pdf)*

- 9.1 Any provision contracts will refer to this policy and contain clauses that will clearly set out the requirements and expectations on external providers to ensure compliance with the requirements of this Policy.
- 9.2 When drafting and reviewing joint-provision and joint-funding contracts, the Council will ensure compliance with this policy, to ensure that the arrangements do not lead to any deterioration in Welsh language provision for the public. We will monitor the contracts to ensure compliance.
- 9.3 If a service is outsourced, or a contract/tender is awarded to provide a service in a Council-owned building, they will be expected to operate to the same standards as set out in this Policy and every effort will be made to ensure that the business or service is conducted bilingually. If appropriate, the Council will ask the provider to draw up an independent language policy that reflects the exact nature of the work and service offered.
- 9.4 The Council works in partnership with a number of public bodies, voluntary sector organisations and other agencies. In any situation of collaboration, the Council will ensure that all organisations operate in accordance with the guidance of the Welsh Language Commissioner (Public Service Contracts Contracting Out Guide), and that planning should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the highest relevant Standards in any situation joint-provision. It should therefore be ensured that any situation of joint-provision or outsourcing the delivery of services does not

contravene the requirements of Gwynedd Council's Welsh Language Standards, and puts the Council at risk of failing to comply.

The Council will also take the following steps:

- i. When the Council leads a partnership, strategically and operationally, it will ensure that the public provision is in accordance with the Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards.
  - ii. When the Council joins a partnership, which is led by another organisation, the Council's input to the partnership will conform to the Language Policy and the Council will encourage the other parties to operate to the same standards.
  - iii. When the Council operates as part of consortia, it will encourage the consortia to adopt a language policy. When working in the public domain in the name of the consortia, the Council will operate in accordance with its Language Policy.
  - iv. When the Council joins or forms a partnership, it will ask prospective partners about their Language Policies, or how they operate bilingually. As a part of each partnership, the Council will offer advice to the other parties involved in the partnership.
- 9.5 The Council will be able to support the above, e.g. by offering advice on bilingualism and hiring translation equipment.

## **SECTION 10 - POLICY MAKING**

(Policy Making Standards 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*The Council sees a close relationship between Welsh language standards and equality issues. An impact assessment is expected of any new policy or procedure, or a change to a policy or procedure, covering equality, human rights and socio-economic issues as well as the Welsh language. This avoids duplication and ensures that we comply with all the duties in these fields.*

***The aim is to follow the advice set out by the Commissioner in the document:***

[Policy Making Standards: Creating opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language \(comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru\)](#)

10.1 The Council will follow internal impact assessment processes which will ensure that the Welsh language is considered alongside equality and well-being issues when considering the impact of any decisions or plans on the Welsh language.

10.2 The likely linguistic impact of any new strategic policy or plan will be assessed in the

planning and development of the strategic policy or plan, and the policy or plan will be modified as appropriate if a potential negative impact is identified in order to maximise the positive impact.

- 10.3 Where appropriate, the Council will establish monitoring arrangements for strategic plans, so that the impact can be measured, and evidence gathered on the link between the plans and the Council's language promotion objectives.
- 10.4 The Council will ensure that any new plans, initiatives or policies comply with the Council's wider commitments to encourage and promote the Welsh language, and that every opportunity is taken to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language within the county's communities.
- 10.5 Service Managers will ensure that full consideration is given to the possible linguist effect of any policy decisions when forming a new policy, or any reviews or adaptations to existing policies. Assessments will be conducted where appropriate to ensure that no new policies have an adverse or negative impact on sustaining the Welsh language in the county.
- 10.6 Any research or consultation conducted in relation to new policies will be required to pay adequate attention to the possible language impact of any decisions.

#### **SECTION 11 - THE COUNCIL'S INTERNAL OPERATIONS**

(Operational Standards 98, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 112A, 113, 115, 116, 116A, 117, 119, 120, 121, 124, 126, 128, 129, 141, 142, 143, 144)

##### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

***The Council operates internally mainly through the medium of Welsh. This means that meetings, and internal communications, are in Welsh. The Welsh language will always be given priority in any oral statements, information bulletins, and on posters and signs.***

***All in-house services for staff, including work policies and the staff intranet and self-service, are provided in Welsh.***

***All staff will be expected to use Welsh versions of computer software.***

***All staff will be expected to use an e-mail signature that states that they are Welsh speakers or learners.***

***Any relevant policies relating to staff rights, disciplinary and grievances processes, will highlight the rights of individuals under the requirements of the Standards. The Council will respect the right of members of staff to exercise their choice of language, and will provide personal information in the language of their choice.***

- 11.1 It is expected that internal Council meetings - including team meetings and meetings between officers to discuss collaboration - are conducted in Welsh.
- 11.2 It is expected that most internal communications are in Welsh, and that reports, work programmes, etc. are produced in Welsh first.
- 11.3 If documents need to be shared with colleagues (internal or external) who cannot speak Welsh, a translation service is available.
- 11.4 The Council's intranet will be in Welsh only, and staff e-mail information bulletins will be in Welsh. English versions of the information bulletins will be provided as an attachment to the e-mail.
- 11.5 Information on the intranet will be mainly in Welsh, with information shared in English as required.
- 11.6 Any information relating to employment matters on staff self-service, and any policies or guidelines on key matters such as Health and Safety, will be available through the medium of Welsh and English.
- 11.7 Any member of staff can submit complaints through the medium of Welsh or English, and any case should be dealt with in the staff member's chosen language.
- 11.8 Every member of staff will be entitled to deal with any disciplinary matters or any other matters relating to working conditions or performance through their chosen language, in Welsh or in English.
- 11.9 **ALL** training offered by the Council will be provided in Welsh. Every step will be taken to help staff participate in training through the medium of Welsh, and training through the medium of English will not be offered for core subjects unless absolutely necessary.
- 11.10 Consideration should be given to the use of simultaneous translation in training sessions, where practicable, to enable staff who lack confidence in Welsh to participate effectively, in order to ensure that Welsh is maintained as the main internal administrative language, and to provide informal, supportive opportunities for staff to practise their Welsh language skills.

### **Supporting staff**

- 11.11 In order to enable the Council to operate in accordance with this policy, the Council's staff will be required to be able to communicate effectively in Welsh and English, up to the appropriate standard and in order to be able to deliver their duties in full.
- 11.12 The Council wishes to work with its staff to reach that situation and every support and encouragement will be given to employees to increase their confidence and

ability in Welsh. At the same time, the Council expects its staff to be committed and to co-operate to achieve that aim.

- 11.13 Staff are encouraged to develop their language skills and they will be released, if necessary, to learn or refresh their skills. The Council will provide for training staff on many levels and will prepare funding for that.
- 11.14 Line Managers will be responsible for encouraging staff to attend training and assess the need for refresher training or skills improvement within their teams.
- 11.15 Language Awareness training will also be offered to the entire workforce, which will raise awareness about the importance of the Welsh language and its history.
- 11.16 There will also be an opportunity for elected members wishing to improve their linguistic skills to join the Council's language training.
- 11.17 The Dafydd Orwig Memorial Prize is awarded annually to learners in order to acknowledge the efforts of staff who have made particular progress over the past twelve months. The prize also acknowledges the work and contribution of language Mentors.

## **SECTION 12 - JOB ADVERTISEMENT AND THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

(Operational Standards 136, 136A, 137, 137A, 137B, 140)

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

*The Welsh language is regarded as an essential skill for every post within the Council.*

*The linguistic requirements of each post must be assessed against the language framework.*

*Job interviews will be conducted in Welsh.*

*An assessment of the language skills of all staff must be undertaken, either on appointment, or as part of induction arrangements.*

### **General/Determining Language Requirements**

- 12.1 The Welsh language should be noted as a key skill **essential** for all posts, with the exact level of language skills required to deliver the post's requirements - listening and speaking, reading and comprehension, and writing - clearly noted in the Person Specification when advertising.
- 12.2 The Manager will determine the exact level of communication ability and skills that will be required to deliver **all** the post's requirements by using the Council's Language Framework.

- 12.3 When a post becomes vacant, managers must ensure that the language requirements are up to date and are suitable for the requirements of the post.
- 12.4 The Council has an internal Recruitment Policy, which provides further guidance to managers on the process to be followed when appointing, and the language requirements to consider at various stages.
- 12.5 For posts where the language requirements are a core part of delivering the post's duties (e.g. in frontline posts where there is a need to deal with the public), individuals must reach the required level from the starting date of their employment.
- 12.6 In other circumstances (e.g. if we have failed to appoint someone with all the required skills at the first attempt) it may be appropriate to appoint individuals who possess other relevant skills and who demonstrate a commitment to developing the language skills over time. In such cases, the Organisational Learning and Development service will be able to provide bespoke support and training, and a suitable development programme will be drawn up in agreement between the Council as the employer, the manager, and post-holder in order to bridge the gap between the skills of the individual and the skills required for the job.
- 12.7 It is the appointing manager's responsibility to ensure that the individual is referred to the Organisational Learning and Development Service as appropriate, that they attend any identified training, and develop their skills.

### **Advertising**

- 12.8 Every staff recruitment advertisement published by the Council will be bilingual, with the exception of teaching posts which are advertised in Welsh only.
- 12.9 All job advertisements will include a sentence which highlights the Council's Welsh-medium internal administration and the need for appropriate language skills among employees.
- "Gwynedd Council operates internally through the medium of Welsh, and offers all its services bilingually. The applicant will be required to reach the linguistic level noted in the Person Specification."*
- 12.10 All candidates are encouraged to submit application forms in Welsh, or bilingually, as a way of demonstrating an understanding of the Welsh language within the Council.
- 12.11 If it is not possible to appoint someone with the necessary linguistic skills after advertising once, consideration can be given to receiving applications from applicants who do not meet the language requirements immediately, but who are willing to commit to learn.

## **THE LANGUAGE DESIGNATION OF THE POST ITSELF WILL NOT BE CHANGED WHEN RE-ADVERTISING.**

- 12.12 In such circumstances, the wording that appears in the advertisement will be changed to the following:

*Rydym yn awyddus i ystyried ceisiadau gan unigolion sydd, o bosib, yn is na lefel iaith y swydd ar hyn o bryd, ond bydd gofyn i'r ymgeisydd llwyddiannus ymrwymo i ddysgu neu ddatblygu i lefel iaith y swydd o fewn amserlen resymol. Bydd y Cyngor yn rhoi cefnogaeth i gyflawni hynny.*

### **English:**

*We are eager to consider applications from individuals who, possibly, do not currently reach the language level of the post, but the successful applicant would be required to commit to either learn, or develop language skills to the required level within a reasonable timescale. The Council will provide support to achieve this.*

### **Appointing/Interviews**

- 12.13 Each interview will be held in Welsh, with one question asked in English in order to provide an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate their skills in both languages.
- 12.14 **The documentation inviting individuals to an interview will note clearly that the interviews will be conducted in Welsh, and that the relevant officer must be contacted in the event of the need to make alternative arrangements.**
- 12.15 If a member of the interview panel is a non-Welsh speaker (e.g. if an external representative is required for any reason) this will not affect the individual's right to a Welsh language interview and the Council will take the responsibility for any translation requirements.

## **SECTION 13 - OTHER MATTERS - ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Staff**

- 13.1 It is expected for every member of staff employed by the Council to comply with this policy. At the same time, it is recognised that some staff and departments are not subject to the Welsh Language Standards for various reasons. This includes:
- staff of GwE and the Trunk Road Agency, and the Ambition Board, which operate at arm's length and under joint-committee status;
  - school teaching staff, who are directly employed by the schools and governing bodies;
  - election staff, who come under the responsibility of the Returning Officer, a role which is independent of the Council.
- 13.2 The Education Department and Language and Scrutiny Unit have prepared a template language policy for use by schools, which reflects the general principles

and commitments in this policy to operate in a way that ensures that the public's right to Welsh language services is always respected. That policy has been shared with all governing bodies of primary and secondary schools in the county, with the hope that it will be adopted and implemented.

### **Volunteers**

- 13.3 If volunteers are used to provide services or activities on behalf of the Council, it should be ensured that they are also aware of the need to provide bilingually and recruit those who are able to communicate in Welsh and English where possible. If volunteers who are not Welsh speakers are recruited, the Council officer or manager should ensure that this does not disrupt the service's ability to offer the activity bilingually.
- 13.4 If volunteers are recruited for the long-term (more than a single activity), it should be ensured that an element of Welsh language awareness or confidence boosting is included in any training for the role.

### **Elected Members**

- 13.5 Elected members are part of the internal procedures of the Council, but they are not subject to the Standards in the same way as the Council's paid employees are.
- 13.6 They are, nevertheless, expected to adhere to and respect the principles of the Council with regard to the Welsh language and to be aware of the requirements on the Council's services and staff.
- 13.7 All members are offered face-to-face and online language awareness training to develop their understanding of the Council's obligations under the Welsh Language Measure and other relevant frameworks and legislation such as the Well-being Act, the Equality Act and the More than Just Words framework.
- 13.8 Elected Members who sit on the Council's Language Committee will have a role to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Standards and Policy. The Language and Scrutiny Unit and Council Departments will submit regular reports to provide them with updates on relevant issues.

## **SECTION 14 - MONITORING AND REPORTING**

(Record Keeping Standards 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153)

### **Monitoring**

- 14.1 The Council will report annually on its compliance with the Language Standards to the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- 14.2 An internal self-assessment process will be implemented, with departments monitoring compliance and reporting any problems or barriers to the Language and

Scrutiny Unit.

- 14.3 Actions and a developmental work programme will be drawn up on the basis of any identified gaps in order to work consistently towards performance improvement.

#### **Language Complaints**

- 14.4 The Council welcomes any complaint against the administering of our Language Policy as evidence of our performance and as an opportunity for improvement.
- 14.5 We will deal with each language complaint according to the Council's corporate standards. The Language and Scrutiny Unit is responsible for monitoring language complaints and they are regularly reported to the Language Committee. The Unit will follow the procedure of reporting formally on any complaints made that have been dealt with in full, and informally on complaints that are still to be resolved. A further explanation of the process we will follow, and the role of the Commissioner, has been published on the Council's website. [Welsh Language Standards and Policy \(llyw.cymru\)](#)
- 14.6 Any complaints relating to this Language Policy or the Council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (2015) will be reported to the Language Commissioner annually.

#### **Review**

- 14.7 This policy will be reviewed regularly, and adapted as required.