



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, TUESDAY, 23RD APRIL, 2024

Location

Virtual Meeting

NOTE

For public access to the meeting, please contact us

Contact Point

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LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (10)

Councillors

Rhys Tudur
Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn
Jina Gwyrfai
Gwynfor Owen
Meryl Roberts

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

Independent (5)

Councillors

Anne Lloyd-Jones
Peter Thomas
Vacant Seat - Independent

Hefin Underwood
Vacant Seat – Independent

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

Other Invited Member

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

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

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

4. MINUTES

4 - 10

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 30 January 2024, be signed as a true record (attached)

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

11 - 16

To present information about the contribution of the Leadership Team and Legal Services to promote and further the Welsh Language.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT

17 - 21

To present information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy.

7. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF MENTER IAITH GWYNEDD

22 - 28

To provide a background to Committee Members about the existing work and priorities of the Menter Iaith.

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE: TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2024

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Jina Gwyrfai, Peter Thomas, Elfed Williams, Menna Baines, Llio Elenid Owen and Meryl Roberts

Officers: Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser), Nia Haf Lewis (Language Adviser), Bet Huws (Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer), Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Iwan Hywel (Hunaniaith Principal Officer) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Item 5: Debbie Anne Jones (Assistant Head of Education Department: Corporate Services), Gwyn Tudur (Assistant Head of Education Department: Secondary) and Rhys Meredydd Glyn (Head of Gwynedd Immersion Education System).

Item 6: Ian Jones (Head of Corporate Support Department).

Item 7: Hedd Morlais Glyn Tomos (Assistant Head of Housing and Property Department), Lowri Cadwaladr Roberts (Assistant Head of Housing and Property Department) and Siôn Elwyn Hughes (Senior Executive Officer - Housing and Property Department).

Item 8: Steffan Jones (Head of Highways, Engineering and YGC Department) and Siôn Arwel Jones (Business Development Manager, Highways, Engineering and YGC Department).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Sasha Williams, Alan Jones Evans and Olaf Cai Larsen.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 24 October 2023 as a true record.

5. THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN

The report was submitted by the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System, in the absence of the Head of Education Department. Attention was drawn briefly to the following main points:

A report was given on a number of events held by the department in order to raise the status of the Welsh language when enabling children and pupils to use the Welsh language at their schools and in the community. It was explained that the department had implemented a number of projects as part of the Welsh Government's Language Charter. It was explained that the Charter's new framework was part of new Welsh Government programmes which aim to increase the use of Welsh amongst children and young people.

It was confirmed that the Department shared this ambition of increasing the use of the Welsh language. It was noted that money was being allocated to every catchment area within the County to arrange activities to encourage the use of Welsh. It was noted that one of the conditions when allocating the money was that activities were being arranged for primary and secondary pupils to ensure that the Welsh language continued to be used as the pupils transferred to the secondary schools. It was emphasised that targeting this cohort of children was necessary to ensure that appealing and positive experiences in the secondary schools took place naturally through the medium of Welsh.

An update was shared of catchment area activities to draw attention to the opportunities that children and young people from all areas of Gwynedd were receiving.

It was explained that Language Forums were being established in every secondary school in Gwynedd which led on the Secondary Language Strategy and the importance of being bilingual was emphasised. It was detailed that the Forums were also holding Hybu Balchder mewn Cymreictod (Promoting Pride in Welshness) sessions.

It was reported that there had been an increase in the number of young people who chose to study and obtain qualifications or an acknowledged accreditation through the medium of Welsh. Attention was drawn to the figures below that had been gathered from the results of the Year 11 cohort in Gwynedd secondary schools at the end of the 2023 summer period:

- 71.7% of Year 11 pupils studied at least 3 KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as a Welsh First Language GCSE.
- 67.8% of Year 11 pupils studied at least 5 KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as a Welsh First Language GCSE.
- 87.1% of Year 11 pupils sat a GCSE Welsh First Language examination.

The Assistant Head of the Education Department: Secondary elaborated that this figure of 67.8% was relatively stable but it was acknowledged that it was necessary to increase the number of pupils who study at least 5 KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as a Welsh First Language GCSE. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that this was a challenging process as the statistic included transitional school pupils.

Information was provided on the pupils' language cohort, including transitional age pupils. Reassurance was given that the department was collaborating regularly with language coordinators in every catchment area in order to collect the linguistic data of Year 2, 6 and 9 pupils to ensure that they made linguistic progress within the curriculum.

Attention was drawn to the language designations of department staff and an analysis was provided of staff assessments based on the Language Designations Framework. It was acknowledged that the department had room for improvement, by ensuring access to the self-assessment for all department staff, to identify those who need support. It was explained that the department's main barrier in this field was reaching those staff members who did not have the technological equipment to complete this questionnaire electronically. It was noted that the department was working to promote the importance of the language designations among staff. It was confirmed that the department was collaborating with the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer to ensure that staff members were confident in their linguistic ability. It was elaborated that a spreadsheet of staff members who had not completed the self-assessment, or needed assistance to reach the language designation of their job, was being shared with the appropriate officer on a regular basis. The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer was thanked for advertising courses and training that was available to assist them.

It was noted that the department was working to overcome recruitment difficulties in the catering and cleaning field. It was emphasised that this work was very important and an appreciation was expressed to all staff for working to ensure that the schools were clean and safe throughout the pandemic, as well as preparing food packages. It was considered that the recruitment challenges were more intense in rural areas of the County but it was hoped that the challenge would be resolved soon.

Reference was made to the 'Research and Technology' priority within the Gwynedd Language Strategy, detailing the Aberwla virtual resource. It was explained that it was an innovative virtual world to assist learners who attended immersion centres to practice linguistic patterns and vocabulary. It was noted that this resource had been developed with the assistance of the Welsh Government's late immersion revenue grant funding.

In response to an enquiry, the Assistant Head of Education: Secondary confirmed that 42 students had studied and completed A Level Welsh First Language examinations during the summer 2023. It was noted that only the pupils of the 7 secondary schools with an A Level provision had been included in this statistic and it did not include any colleges in the County. It was reported that this number of pupils was higher than the numbers who had studied the subject in 2022 and was equivalent to a quarter of all Welsh First Language A Level course pupils in Wales in 2023. It was noted that officers were collaborating with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to promote the course and attract pupils to complete it.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and note the observations received.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: CORPORATE SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

The report was submitted by the Head of the Environment Department, and he highlighted the following main points in brief:

Reference was made to a number of projects that the department was working on to promote the Welsh language, including; collaborating with Menter Iaith Gwynedd and the process of establishing an independent entity, place name project and collaborating with schools to develop a spoken place names map and Prosiect 15. It was noted that the department had supported apprentices to qualify through the medium of Welsh and influence the further education sector to hold Welsh-medium sessions for students.

It was confirmed that an amended Language Policy had been adopted in October 2022 and the new Language Strategy had been adopted in December 2023. It was explained that the Language Policy was being promoted to staff in various ways, including meetings with the heads of department. In addition, messages are being shared with staff via the Council's intranet site, messages and the weekly bulletin.

It was noted that information about training for staff and staff designation details were being included in the report and the department was offering additional development opportunities, such as Cadernid Iaith training, which would be available to staff in the future. It was explained that this was an addition to the Language Awareness training that already existed. With the training, it was hoped that individuals would feel more confident and more certain of their language and less prepared to turn to English in circumstances where there was no need to do so.

It was reported by Ben, the Menter Iaith Officer, that they were prepared to work in partnership with anyone who was eager to do so in order to promote the Welsh language, with the main emphasis being placed on the Menter's priority fields. Specific attention was drawn to a project being developed jointly with M-Sparc, the Urdd and the National Eisteddfod to create a Welsh video game platform, funded by ARFOR.

It was acknowledged that the department had had to prioritise work recently and therefore, the work of developing a Welsh Events Map had not progressed in the past months. It was noted that the hope was to attract partners to help promote the map in order to populate it with more events. It was confirmed that this would happen in the coming months.

During the discussion, many Members expressed concern about the use of English names on OS maps recently. In response to this concern, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that the Council had held meetings with the OS in the past but that the Council had no influence over their actions, because anyone could contact the company to propose names for the maps. It was elaborated that the Cabinet Member for Corporate Support could send a letter to the OS, expressing the Committee's disappointment and concern. A request was made by the Chair for the Cabinet Member to formally send a letter to the company.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

- 1. To accept the report and note the observations received.**
- 2. It was agreed to ask the Cabinet Member for Corporate Support to send a letter to the OS company to voice the committee's concern regarding the use of English rather than Welsh names on various locations on their maps.**

7. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: HOUSING AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

The report was submitted by the Assistant Head of Housing and Property. Reference was made to the following main points:

Members were reminded that the department sustained a mix of front line, corporate and commercial services and reassurance was given that they could deliver the department's duties bilingually, and that respecting the customer's language of choice was essential.

Members were reminded that the department had held a number of events throughout the National Eisteddfod week in 2023. It was noted that events had been held on the theme of

'Gwynedd Glyd' and raised awareness of the Council's housing plans in order to address the existing housing crisis, and that around 60% of the County's population had been priced out of the local market at the moment. It was considered that these sessions had been beneficial, considering that shift and migration was a huge challenge to the department and the Welsh language in Gwynedd.

It was reported that the main plans could be seen in the department's Housing Action Plan. It was explained that 30 operational and strategic projects had been included in the plan, with a vision for their development for the next 6 years. Attention was drawn to the residential element grant in community regeneration plans. It was explained that it was a grant provided to communities to develop additional living units.

It was confirmed that 96% of the department's staff met the language designations of their job, with 60% of those staff reaching higher levels than the linguistic requirements of their jobs. It was detailed that 85% of all department staff had completed a linguistic self-assessment following the head's ongoing encouragement. Members were reminded that this was a 6% increase of all department staff.

It was emphasised that learning opportunities were considered within the department for staff. It was noted that officers supported staff who lacked confidence in their linguistic skills. The fact that many staff members in the department had voluntarily completed linguistic training outside work was something to celebrate. It was noted that the department had identified a challenge for some of the Council's staff as they followed a hybrid working arrangement. It was considered that working from home on some days reduced the opportunities that Welsh learners had to practice their linguistic skills. It was emphasised that the department ensured that every opportunity was given to relevant staff to practice their Welsh and that this was a consideration for the future as the new hybrid working arrangements came into force in April 2024.

It was mentioned that the department set a condition that the service and support providers had to speak Welsh in relation to Service Level Agreements. Examples seen at Tŷ Adferiad, Porthmadog, as well as sites in Bangor, were shared.

Frustration was shared at the lack of Welsh or bilingual resources in the field of housing. Members were reassured that the department was placing pressure on the Welsh Government to address this. It was detailed that many regional and national discussions were currently held in English, with no priority given to the Welsh language. It was confirmed that the department would welcome a change in order to see meetings being held through the medium of Welsh, with simultaneous translation and bilingual documents provided. Reassurance was given that the department's discussions with partners and housing associations in Gwynedd were held in Welsh, with translation available if required.

In response to an enquiry on the First Time Buyer Empty House Grants, it was explained that an amendment had been made to the plan, which meant that empty houses that used to be second homes were eligible for the grant. It was noted that 1 grant application had been completed following this amendment and that another 5 applications were in the process of being assessed.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and note the observations received.

8. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN: HIGHWAYS, ENGINEERING AND YGC DEPARTMENT

The report was presented by the Head of Highways, Engineering and YGC Department. Reference was made to the following main points:

It was explained that the department produced a Highways, Engineering and YGC Newsletter, as well as a YGC Bulletin, on a regular basis. It was confirmed that these promoted the use of Welsh in the department because they were circulated in Welsh only. Reassurance was given that efforts were being made so that every member of staff received it, and by printing hard copies for any member of staff who did not use computer equipment.

It was reported that the department had received good feedback as they attended national events such as the National Eisteddfod in Boduan and the Royal Welsh Show in Builth Wells. It was noted that the department's hope, in these events this year, was to educate young people about the work that the department undertakes.

Reference was made to some of the challenges faced by the department, such as English-only documentation when contacting partners and associated companies. Nevertheless, pride was expressed that one of YGC's engineers had been appointed as a mentor for the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) and gave support to the Gwynedd, Môn and Conwy councils on their work.

An example was shared of an error made by a contractor recently where no bilingual signs had been used in a development work site. It was confirmed that the department had assisted with translations of the signs and a swift solution was found to the situation. It was emphasised that the department would monitor the use of bilingual signs very closely in the future following this incident. It was explained that notices could be given to contractors and reduce the amount payable to them when this occurred. It was acknowledged that such difficulties were likely to arise when using out-of-county contractors, but it was explained that the department used specific frameworks to identify contractors in order to ensure quality and value for money. It was emphasised that local frameworks were in place, but out-of-county contractors must be used from time to time when the service was not available in Gwynedd.

It was confirmed that the department had established a new fleet service system. It was explained that the system assisted to track vehicles and manage assets. It was noted that Welsh appeared first on the system. It was explained that this system was being used by other stakeholders such as UK Highways and the trunk road agent.

It was reported that the department employed 507 members of staff (120 in the 7GC service and 387 in the rest of the department), with a number of employees not using computers in their day-to-day work. It was noted that the department had simplified the on-line assessment and had also distributed a paper version to ensure that manual workers completed the assessment. It was explained that this was a factor which assisted the department to increase the response level in the self-assessment, and that 95.63% of the department's staff had now completed it.

Pride was expressed at the success of a series of videos developed for social media which explained the duties of various services in the department. It was noted that these videos had been shared bilingually for all residents to be aware of the department's work. It was confirmed that these videos had been a huge success and had raised morale within the teams. It was noted that the department was happy and eager for other departments to produce similar videos if they wished.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and note the observations received.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.55am.

CHAIR

<u>MEETING</u>	Language Committee
<u>DATE</u>	23 April 2024
<u>TITLE</u>	Welsh Language Promotion Plan – Leadership Team and Legal Services
<u>PURPOSE</u>	Present information about the contribution of the Leadership Team and Legal Services to promote and further the Welsh language
<u>AUTHOR</u>	Geraint Owen – Corporate Director Iwan Evans – Head of Legal Services

1. **CONTEXT**


- 1.1. This report was prepared to share information with the Language Committee about the way in which the Leadership Team and Legal Services promote and advance the Welsh language.
- 1.2. The Leadership Team employs 19 members of staff including the Chief Executive, two Corporate Directors, the Executive Support Team, the Poverty Team, as well as officers from the Council’s Business Support Service. Furthermore, 23 members of staff are employed by the Legal Services.

In his role, the Chief Executive, with the assistance of the Directors, is responsible for the leadership and general management of the Council’s workforce.

The Legal Services provide legal support across the whole range of the Council’s work; supporting the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer to carry out their proprietary responsibilities; supporting the Returning Officer and the Electoral Officer, and; supporting the Coroner’s service for Northwest Wales.

2. **PROMOTION**

- 2.1. The Chief Executive holds responsibility for ensuring that our ambition in terms of promoting and advancing the use of the Welsh language is upheld across all departments of the Council. It is a role that requires the CEO, the Corporate Director and Statutory Director (Social Services) to provide support to departments as required, while other times offering challenge in a constructive way.

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- 2.2. The roles of the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors involve regular participation in multi-agency meetings at both regional and national levels. It is disappointing that some organisations, including the Welsh Government, continue to conduct meetings through the medium of English all too often. In this regard, please refer to Appendix 1 for a copy of a letter recently sent to the Welsh Government highlighting these shortcomings.
 - 2.3. The Leadership Team has been spearheading an initiative for all staff to install Welsh-medium Microsoft software on their devices. An additional increase in the number of people using Welsh-medium software was achieved over the past year, but encouragement and ongoing effort are essential to achieve the goal of having all officers using Welsh-medium software.
 - 2.4. The Corporate Director chairs the Council's Digital Transformation Board, which is tasked with developing and implementing the new corporate Digital Plan. The Welsh language is central to the Plan, and this emphasis is reflected in the Digital Suitability Assessment; a mandatory step before any of the Council's departments acquire a digital system or service.
 - 2.5. The Corporate Director, together with the Senior Language and Scrutiny Officer, is a member of a Steering Group established by the Welsh Language Commissioner to develop policy models aimed at increasing the use of Welsh within public bodies in Wales. The Council's role in the Group is essentially consultative to share good practice, and to this end, a dedicated meeting between the Council's representatives and the Deputy Commissioner was held in March to further explore ideas.
 - 2.6. The Corporate Director, together with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member responsible for the Welsh language, participates in the Gwynedd Language Forum established by the Council's Language Unit. Since its establishment, the Forum has convened three times and has more recently formed a sub-group dedicated to examining the opportunities and decisions made by young people to pursue further and higher education through the medium of Welsh or English.
 - 2.7. The Corporate Director is also a member of the Project Group which promoted "Project 15", aimed at increasing the material available on social media platforms through the medium of Welsh. Funds have been earmarked to support this work, which is spearheaded by the officers of the Language Unit.
 - 2.8. The Corporate Director is a member of the Gwynedd and Môn Public Services Board, and has had the opportunity to promote and support a plan aimed at increasing the use of the Welsh language at the entrances of various other public bodies in Gwynedd.



- 2.9. The Corporate Director has been supporting the arrangements for establishing Menter Iaith Gwynedd, with the expectation that the final official steps for transferring the responsibilities of “Hunaniaith” to this independent entity will occur within the coming year.
- 2.10. The Statutory Director (Social Services) holds particular responsibilities for promoting the use of the Welsh language. It is expected that all local governments and Health Boards in Wales appoint a senior leader as a “champion” of the Welsh language as part of the “Mwy na Geiriau” (More than Words) programme. In Gwynedd, this role is held by the Statutory Director.
- 2.11. As part of this work, the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 requires that the “champion” ensures the use of the “Cynnig Rhagweithiol” (Proactive Officer), which entails providing a service in Welsh without having to ask for it, on every occasion. In Gwynedd, to achieve this goal, the Director chairs the "More than Words" group, which meets monthly to ensure that systems are in place to enable the “Proactive Offer” across the County.
- 2.12. The Director of Social Services adjudicated the Social Care Wales national awards on the use of the Welsh language in the care sector.
- 2.13. The Council plays a leading role in several regional partnerships and the Legal Services have been at the forefront in establishing the governance arrangements of these partnerships, e.g., the Corporate Joint Committee (CBC) for North Wales. There are several dynamics at play in ensuring that the arrangements of these partnerships operate bilingually; but, the input from the Legal Services means that the arrangements, including the governance documentation etc., are prepared and provided in both Welsh and English on an equal basis. Gwynedd’s ability to handle technical and specialist matters in both Welsh and English means that we can provide assurance and confidence in achieving objectives. This is a principle that is clearly established within our partnership work and is rapidly developing into the norm.
- 2.14. While the performance of the Coroner’s Service primarily falls within the purview of the function holder, several aspects relate to the role of the Legal service:
 - 2.14.1. As Gwynedd appoints the Coroner and Assistant Coroners, we wield significant influence over the requirements for these positions. This means that we have been able to ensure that appointees can carry out their duties through the medium of Welsh and English. This has been recognised by the Ministry of Justice and the Chief Coroner, who oversee these arrangements.
 - 2.14.2. The Electoral Services Officer is a member of the Welsh Language Advisory Group of the Wales Electoral Coordination Board. The Group includes



representatives from local government, the Electoral Commissioner, the Welsh Westminster governments. The group's objective is to ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in terms of electoral legislation and guidelines. It also shared good practice in matters relation to the Welsh language across authorities and ensures that Welsh-medium training is available to polling station staff.

- 2.14.3. The Officer also serves as Vice Chair of the Welsh Branch of the Association of Electoral Administrators, which provides support, training and guidance to officers across the United Kingdom. The Association is currently developing training through the medium of Welsh for polling station staff.
- 2.14.4. The Electoral Unit has supported the company that provides our electronic electoral management system to enhance its capability to generate standard letters and warning in Welsh, and these documents are therefore also available to the other authorities who use the same system.


3. POLICY ISSUES AND STANDARDS

STAFF LANGUAGE SKILLS

- 3.1. Within the Leadership Team, it is confirmed that all members of staff meet the language requirements of their respective roles.

BARRIERS

- 3.2. Currently, the Legal Services commissions local workers and external lawyers to fulfil specific capacity or expertise requirements. It must be acknowledged that it is a challenge to ensure such provision through the medium of Welsh. However, whenever possible, we will prioritise using individuals who can work proficiently through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.3. Another aspect is the need to employ high level specialist lawyers who can deliver Services through the medium of Welsh. Whenever possible, we instruct lawyers and barristers with the language skills. On some occasions, it is possible to secure a Service at the highest level to give advice or opinion through the medium of Welsh. However, on issues requiring a larger team, specialised expertise, extensive project scope, ensuring Welsh-language provision is very difficult, if not impractical. While the ability to deliver Services in Welsh is identified on national framework agreements, it is not universally guaranteed across all companies. This is widely reflected even in companies that have their roots in Wales.
- 3.4. There are a total of 22.25 Full Time Equivalent employees – 25 individuals in Legal Services. All the employed staff can fulfil all the requirements of the posts through




the medium of Welsh. There are 3 non-Welsh speaking locums (equivalent of 1.5 positions) currently supporting either legal work or in the main regional legal work.

- 3.5. It can be considered in the medium term that it is possible to move to a position where all services provided to Gwynedd and regionally can be achieved through the Welsh language. Our employment situation in the legal has considerably improved in terms of sustainably attracting and retaining staff. We are building on this and are confident that the development can continue. This includes taking advantage of the Cynllun Yfory to develop staff internally either through professional trainees or apprenticeships. There are specific and specialised requirements around our regional work that impose short-term requirements that we must meet and require expertise of a certain kind.
- 3.6. It is important to recognise that the Gwynedd Legal Service stands out among the 22 local governments, having a team where all officers can provide a complete Service through the medium of Welsh. This remains unchanged and the issues identified above have not altered the culture nor nature of the Service.
- 3.7. Cooperation with external organisations, many of which do not primarily operate in Welsh internally, is crucial. For instance, the Statutory Director (Social Services) works closely with the Health Board and makes every effort to ensure that meetings are conducted through the medium of Welsh. However, the Health Board tends to switch to English if any participant cannot understand Welsh, rather than arranging for an interpreter beforehand. The former Director succeeded to ensure that most meetings were held in Welsh by working with the Area Director of the Health Board.
- 3.8. The Statutory Director uses his influence as a Welsh speaker to encourage the use of Welsh in external meetings and workshops, always contributing in Welsh to ensure that provision is made for the Welsh language.

CANMOLIAETH A CHWYNION

- 3.9. A conference was organised in Aberystwyth in January to bring together for the first time the various graduate schemes run by public bodies in Wales. Welsh was the principal language of the conference, with all but two speakers (9 in total) presenting either in Welsh or bilingually, together with live interpretation for contributions in Welsh. Many participants from external organisations remarked in the feedback that the event was the most Welsh-speaking professional space they had ever attended.
- 3.10. The Wales Graduate Schemes Network was established following the conference, with participation from the various public bodies in Wales that run graduate schemes. Cyngor Gwynedd leads the Network and has ensured that the Welsh language is fundamental to all work, garnering commendation from Efa Gruffydd Jones, the Welsh Language Commissioner. E.g., one idea is to create opportunities



for graduate trainees who speak Welsh but who work in organisations operating internally through the medium of English, to shadow a trainee in another organisation where Welsh is the main business language, e.g., Cyngor Gwynedd. To this end, we have received the following statement of support from the Commissioner (sig., translated from Welsh): *“We need to be able to offer dedicated opportunities to young people within the world of work where they can use and see the value of their Welsh. [...] I very much welcome the [Network] to make Welsh central when introducing apprentices and trainees to the world of work. It will be an opportunity for young people who do not work through the medium of Welsh to develop their professional skills in the language and get a taste of a Welsh-speaking work environment. It will also be an opportunity to share good practice with those organisations that currently operate primarily through the medium of English.”*

4. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.1. There is room for reflection regarding the service and the linguistic resources within the Legal Service, e.g., technical documents that we have created. This could be a resource to share externally under proper conditions, subject to resource availability.
- 4.2. As a Leadership Team, we will continue to promote and take advantage of every opportunity to ensure that the Welsh language is given its proper place, not only in the work of the Council but also at community level within the County, regionally and nationally.

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Council, we would first like to extend our congratulations on your new role in the Government's Cabinet, and we look forward to working with you over the coming years.

It is regrettable that our initial correspondence with you is to express significant concern about the way in which the Welsh language has been treated as inferior by the Welsh Government in recent times in correspondence and meetings with Cyngor Gwynedd. Several examples of English-only communications from the Government have come to our attention, as well as meetings organised by the Government without the provision of simultaneous translation. We believe that this neither meets the Standards to which the Government is subject regarding the use of Welsh, nor is it in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Measure (2011) and your own Language Policy. It is greatly disappointing to have to contact the Government to complain about its lack of commitment to its own legislation – we would expect the Government to set an example for all public bodies in Wales, rather than relying on us to issue reminders about the importance of treating Welsh equally to English in all cases.

Time and again, we as officers and Elected Members join virtual and face-to-face meetings, only to find no simultaneous translation. In a similar vein, there are countless examples of English-only correspondence justified by the disparaging explanation that the subject is urgent and therefore officers, as well as Ministers, feel that the initial correspondence should be sent only in English for the time being, accompanied by the promise that a "Welsh version will follow". We do not accept this as reasonable and it is used far too often as a cheap and convenient excuse. More often than not, the Welsh version is never sent, throwing salt in the wound.

The Welsh language has not been treated equally with English in a considerable portion of the correspondence received from the Government, and since May 2023, we have received dozens of English-only official emails (over 30 between May and December 2023), where a Welsh version of the given correspondence was not available. Moreover, much of this correspondence included appendices, such as operational documents where the Council was required to provide a response, which were also available only in English. Below, we would like to draw your attention to some examples of this type of correspondence:

- 17/05/23: English-only grant letter – "Gwynedd - 20mph Grant – 2023-24".
- 18/05/23: English-only grant letter – "Award of Funding FY2023-34 – Local Transport Fund and Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle Transformation Fund".
- 18/05/23: Bilingual email but English-only grant letter – "Award of Active Travel Fund 2023-24".

- 15/06/23: English-only email requesting information on the housing stock of the social sector – "Urgent Request for Information on over 11m Housing Stock within the Social Sector in Wales".
- 20/06/23: English-only grant letter – "B-GWY-0004 –Correcting the disparity in the condition and suitability of schools Phase III & IV – grant award letter".
- 21/06/23: Metro Fund funding award documents – "Gwynedd - Metro fund FY2023-24".
- 05/07/23: English-only letters – "Letter to local authority partners: Closure of Afghan hotels".
- 19/12/23: English-only grant letter – "Final Grant Award Letter for 2023-24: Homelessness, 'No one left out' approach".
- 30/10/23: English-only grant letter – "Gwynedd: Award Letter Unadopted Roads 2023-24".
- 02/11/23: English monolingual letter – "Request for information: Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Provision".
- 17/11/23: English-only letter – "WG Letter to Las: Annex A Report – Future of Day Services Mencap Cymru".
- 28/11/23: English-only grant letter – "REVISED Final Grant Award Letter for 2023-24 – Homelessness, 'No one left out' approach."

Examples of meetings without the provision of live translation are becoming increasingly common too. At the meeting of the Directors of Social Care with the Welsh Government on Thursday 7 December 2023, the provision of live translation had not been arranged. Several meetings with Ministers appear to be held only through the medium of English, especially virtual ones. Such meetings adversely impact the use of Welsh as a business language and deprive our officers of the choice to participate in the language of their choice, their first language, and the national language of our country!

In addition to receiving English-only correspondence accompanied by the comment that a Welsh version will follow (which, more often than not, fails to be sent), as well as meetings held solely in English, we are also aware of certain email addresses designated for Welsh correspondence to the Government that do not work. We draw your attention to following address as one example:

GC.Gohebiaeth.Gweithlu@llyw.cymru

We ask that the Government investigates the reasons for this relaxation in Welsh-language use, which appears to be happening much too often. Has a deliberate decision been made by Ministers or officers to this effect?

Welsh is the administrative language of Cyngor Gwynedd, and across Wales, public bodies – including the Welsh Government – have expressed their intention to increase their internal use of the Welsh language. However, the pattern delineated above of Welsh being treated less favourably than English has a detrimental impact not only on the internal use of Welsh within the Council, but also on broader efforts to promote its use in workplaces across Wales. The use of Welsh as a business language is fundamental to the Welsh Language Standards to which we are subject, both to encourage and facilitate the use of Welsh by officers of public bodies. We trust that you share our concern and disappointment regarding the current situation, and we anticipate that you will carefully consider the content of this letter.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

Dafydd Gibbard,

Chief Executive Officer.

Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn

Council Leader

Cllr. Efed Wyn ap Elwyn

Chairman of the Language Committee

MEETING	Language Committee
DATE	23 April 2024
TITLE	Economy and Community Department Report
PURPOSE	To present information about the Department's contribution to the Language Policy
AUTHOR	Sioned E. Williams, Head of Economy and Community Department

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report was prepared in response to the Language Committee's request for information on the Community and Economy Department's contribution to Gwynedd Council's Language Policy. The report focuses on the progress made over the last year and the table has been prepared in response to the Committee's specific questions. Relevant examples of the Department's services that I would like to highlight have been included.

Question 1. Promoting and advancing

How does your department go beyond offering bilingual services and contributes to the objectives of the county's language strategy (what activities and projects have been carried out during the past year which raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh in the community)?

The Council's language strategy sets out priorities for promoting the Welsh language in five areas:

1. The language of the family,
2. The language of learning,
3. The language of work and services,
4. The language of the community,
5. Research and Technology

The current strategy can be seen here: ([FERSIWN_NEWYDD_CYMRAEG\(SAESNEG\)\(2\).indd \(llyw.cymru\)](#))

Economic Development: The Department has collaborated with partners to submit a bid to the Welsh Government to fund phase 2 of the Arfor Programme. The purpose of the Arfor programme is to support communities that are Welsh language strongholds to thrive by means of economic interventions. There are four main objectives:

- Create opportunities for children and young families (≤ 35 years old) to remain or return to their native communities
- Create enterprising communities within Welsh-speaking areas
- Maximise the benefits of activity by collaborating
- Strengthen the identity of communities with a high density of Welsh-speakers

£11m has been earmarked for expenditure between January 2023 and March 2025 on a package of projects and we have agreed on five projects to fund:

1. Llwyddo'n Lleol (Succeeding Locally)
2. Cymunedau Mentrus (Enterprising Communities)
3. ARFOR Challenge Fund
4. Strengthen the identity of ARFOR communities
5. Learning from the ARFOR Programme

The Department is leading the programme across Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire councils, and a full appraisal of the programme will be available at the end of the phase to gauge the impact on communities.

Business Support: The Service has made it a requirement for any business that receives financial support to commit to completing an assessment of their use of the Welsh language and to work towards securing the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Welsh language Offer' designation. As a result, 79 businesses from Gwynedd have completed an assessment and 12 have secured the 'Welsh language Offer' accreditation during 2023/24.

Tourism, Marketing and Events: The Service has launched the Gwynedd and Eryri Plan 2035 which is a Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan for the area, formed jointly with the Eryri National Park Authority. One of the principles agreed on is to 'Celebrate, Respect and Protect our Communities, Language, Culture and Heritage'. Through the Plan, priority will be given to promoting local ownership and to developing opportunities to highlight the Welsh language, our culture and heritage.

The Service is working with Bangor University to carry out specific research to try to develop a way of measuring the impact of tourism on the Welsh language within a pilot area in the Ogwen Valley. This work could lead to further research during 2024.

The Service has also agreed to a new indicator, namely '*A percentage of the County's residents believe that tourism has a positive influence on the Welsh language and culture of Wales*' so that the concerns and findings can be responded to through specific activities or interventions. The Gwynedd Ambassador modules also promote an awareness of the Welsh language, culture and heritage of Gwynedd and now over 300 individuals have registered on the scheme.

Museums and Arts:

The Museums Service organises all its exhibitions bilingually and provides a range of activities in Welsh (and some bilingual ones too). The cafe space in Storiell continues as a community hub working with Menter Iaith Bangor to hold baby café sessions as well as sessions to encourage informal conversations over a cuppa between Welsh-speakers and new Welsh-speakers.

Gwynedd Community Arts continues to provide bilingual sessions across Gwynedd to encourage creativity and well-being in the communities of Gwynedd through the arts.

Through the SPF Grants and Community Arts Grants, support is given to cultural organisations and companies in Gwynedd to reach every part of the county and offer a Welsh and bilingual provision. In art activities that are led by a non-Welsh-speaking Artist, the Service uses a Welsh-speaking assistant who supports the Artist to learn, and to provide a Welsh language service to attendees and the parents.

A mix of Welsh and English speakers attended the Craft for Well-being project activities - and the feedback was very positive about this opportunity for people to learn Welsh in a relaxing and supportive atmosphere.

Slate Landscape of North West Wales:

The Welsh language is a horizontal theme within the Management Plan and is addressed at each Partnership Board meeting. Discussions have been held to identify opportunities to monitor any impacts that could derive from projects developing from the designation on the Welsh language by collaborating with Bangor University and discussions continue on subsequent research.

Via the LleNI LleCHI: Our World Heritage Site, Our Pride, Our Future project, there will be opportunities to promote the Welsh language as the community language across the slate areas. Resources and activities will target learners and newcomers and attention will be given to protecting place names and terms so that they are not lost. A large number of events and activities to raise awareness of slate heritage will be part of the project and the language and culture of the slate valleys will be an integral part of what is celebrated and staged through the plan.

Gwynedd Archives: The Archives and Museums Education Service is highly innovative and provides materials and activities for school across Gwynedd in order for them to better understand their communities, the importance of the Welsh language and local identity.

Gwynedd Libraries: The vast majority of activities for children and families, and adults held in Gwynedd Libraries are either Welsh medium only or with Welsh as a central part of them. We believe that by giving people an opportunity to hear and chat, and participate through the medium of Welsh, that the Welsh language will be seen as a community, living language.

This is a quote from an attendee “The story sessions are the only exposure I have to Welsh nursery rhymes and Welsh stories.”

As a result of feedback where new speakers asked to join a story session for children to improve their Welsh language skills, we have started three 'Paned a Sgwrs' groups for new speakers in our Libraries, namely Barmouth, Cricieth and Bethesda libraries. These sessions are an opportunity to present various materials and resources that are available from the library, and they often attract 6-12 attendees at a time. Another learners' group meets in Nefyn Library.

We believe that there is added value in holding the sessions in the main Library so that the public can hear the language being used in a natural and everyday way, giving everyone an opportunity to socialise and support each other.

By means of our collaboration plans with the North Wales Society for the Blind and Y Lolfa, we are able to produce audio book resources and audio e-books, and bold print books, in Welsh, with these resources available at Gwynedd Libraries and Libraries across Wales. Through our collaboration at a national level, we ensure that Welsh language interfaces will be an essential requirement in all tenders for digital systems and services.

We work with 'Cymraeg i Blant' to hold sessions for children and families at specific Libraries and this collaboration has been very successful.

The interface of the majority of systems is available in Welsh including our on-line catalogue, the self-service system and Borrowbox.

Neuadd Dwyfor: We are developing a wider programme in the theatre with the emphasis on developing live Welsh nights with bands and artists, such as Al Lewis and Cowbois Rhos Botwnnog.

We continue to encourage our staff teams to speak Welsh together and to assess any needs or support they require to communicate naturally together in Welsh.

Question 2. Policy and Standards Matters

- i. Staff language skills - number of Welsh-speakers and learners within the department (latest Language Designations data).
- ii. Obstacles - Are there any obstacles that prevent you as a department from offering a full service in Welsh (i.e. acting on the requirements of the Welsh Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards)?
- iii. Praise and Complaints - provide information about any praise or complaints the department has received during the year about Welsh/bilingual services.

Staff's Language Skills:

93.7% of the Department's staff had completed every language assessment by 1 March 2024, with 83.3% having completed a self-assessment only. There were 14 members of staff who had not submitted a language self-assessment, and this is mainly because they are either new appointments, or casual front-line staff who have no access to the Council's systems.

Because collecting information from casual and front-line staff can be challenging, we will be focusing on collecting assessments for those officers from line managers in order to note whether the individuals meet the language designations of their jobs or not.

The assessments show that 96.65% of the Department's staff have met the language designations of the job which is an increase on the 93% reported in 2023.

Of the seven members of staff who do not meet the language designation of their job, we will target these individuals to follow language training and this matter is being addressed.

Barriers:

In terms of the Museums and Arts Service, it is not always possible to work with Welsh-speaking artists - if this is the case, we support them to conduct the activities with Assistants who speak Welsh and give the artists who are new speakers an opportunity to use Welsh if they are confident to do so. Support is available through the Arts Council for Wales for artists to learn Welsh but it may be an idea to offer more support through Cyngor Gwynedd.

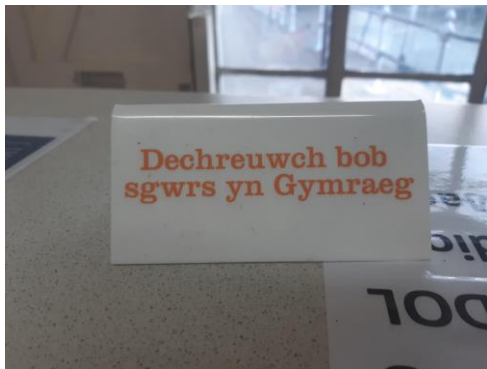
It is challenging at times to share information on social media which is relevant to the arts in Gwynedd if it is not available bilingually.

The ability of the Service to attract Welsh-speakers or new speakers as volunteers continues to be challenging and we are considering the best methods of attracting and managing volunteers for the service.

Maritime and Beaches: Recruiting a sufficient number of seasonal officers to manage our main beaches was very problematic once again in 2023, and therefore there was no choice but to employ a number of officers who did not meet the language requirements of the job. This was more of a problem in our destinations in the south of the county, such as Barmouth and Tywyn.

Some permanent officers of the service, because English is their first language, continue to speak English together despite our efforts to encourage and motivate them to speak Welsh. It is difficult to monitor the use of the Welsh language in the workplace consistently in every location, but the matter is regularly addressed by the team to remind all officers of the expectation.

We encourage all customers who visit our offices to start every conversation in Welsh - see the attached photos.



Question 3. Development Opportunities

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

The Museums and the Arts Service could offer broader activities within our communities to support well-being, creativity, cultural understanding and linguistic skills - but there is a continuous challenge of securing additional funding in order to achieve this work and there is no core budget available in the Service to deliver more than what is already done. We are trying to do this during 2024 through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity (SPF) funding following the appointment of an Engagement and Learning Officer.

Through the projects of the Slate Landscape of North West Wales World Heritage Site, there are opportunities to promote the Welsh language as the community language across the slate areas. The projects in the pipeline offer opportunities for us to build on these opportunities as we attract additional funding to achieve the Action Plan and develop the National Heritage Lottery Fund project.

By using the Service's collections, the Archives Service could offer activities in our communities and in our record offices to promote the Welsh language. Depending on the activity, this could either be achieved with the Service's staff or in collaboration with others - however, the capacity to implement is limited.

MEETING:	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE:	23 April 2024
TITLE:	Update on the work of Menter Iaith Gwynedd
AUTHOR:	Iwan Hywel, Chief Officer, Menter Iaith Gwynedd
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	This report is submitted in order to provide a background to Committee members about the existing work and priorities of the Menter Iaith.

1. Background

1.1 The fundamental intention of *Menter Iaith Gwynedd is to increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in all areas of their lives and in all communities across Gwynedd. This report takes a retrospective look at the past year and presents examples of the officers' work in order to improve Members' understanding of the type of interventions that are planned across the various fields.

*The name "Hunaniaith" was dropped in summer 2023, deciding on a simpler name that is in line with the rest of the language initiatives across the country.

1.2 The new Chief Officer of Menter Iaith Gwynedd started his work in May 2022, following the Cabinet's decision in 2021 to fund a Chief Officer for the language initiative "to focus on attracting new grants and raising income, improving the community connections, attracting more community members to the Strategic Group and working towards becoming an independent entity." The post will be funded for 4 years from 2021.

2. Overview of 2023-2024 work

2.1 Work to externalise Menter Iaith Gwynedd has continued over the past year. The initiative was registered as a not-for-profit company with Companies House on 1 August 2023 and there was a 'soft' launch in front of the Welsh language minister on the Eisteddfod field on the Cyngor Gwynedd stand. The directors of the new company are four volunteers and there is a wider group of 7 on the lead group who advise the directors. The launch was 'soft' to reflect that paid staff are still currently working for Cyngor Gwynedd. Complications with pensions have meant that the current 3 members of staff will now move to work for the new initiative on 1 April 2025, rather than April this year. The independent language initiative will receive a service level agreement from the Council to employ one officer in the Meirionnydd area during 24-25, following the departure of one member of staff during 23-24 which created a vacancy, and therefore it was sensible for the new initiative to employ afresh rather than adding another complication to the process of externalising. A Project Board of council officers now comes together regularly, including representation from finance and legal departments, to discuss the externalisation process and it will be an agenda item at a cabinet meeting in May.

- 2.2. Most of our work focuses on Theme 2 of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, namely 'Increasing the Use of the Welsh language'. Our work with the public is split into three specific fields, namely Children and Young People, Families and Community. Section 3 of this report gives a taste of some of the main schemes that took place in 2023-24 within the 3 areas.
- 2.3 We need to attract more volunteers to take action for the Welsh language in our communities across the county, therefore we are not simply aiming to 'hold' or 'arrange' events, rather plan events and interventions which will inspire people, so that we are able to empower and support communities and individuals to take action themselves as well.
- 2.5 We succeeded to attract additional funding during the year, £24,000 from various funds which increased our capacity to offer more activities and generate income which will support us as Menter Iaith Gwynedd evolves over the next year.

3. Specific projects

3.1 Families

3.1.2 - **Stori a loga**- sessions for parents with young children have been held in Bangor, Llanbedrog and Bala

3.1.3 **Llanbedrog**- Working collaboratively with local group 'Llanbedrog Playing Field Committee' the committee was supported to hold several events over the year, events such as a pancake night with Tudur Phillips, a carol service and a Santes Dwynwen disco.

3.1.4 **Mynydd Llandygai**- An evening with an "in character" company was held before Christmas for the families of the village, a special performance of a Christmas show with a simultaneous translation system available to those unable to speak Welsh. Refreshments followed the performance and an opportunity for residents to tell us as officers of the language initiative and the hall committee what they wanted to see happen to support increasing the use of Welsh. Informal opportunities to chat/practise Welsh, family events and getting to know the local area were top priorities.

The hall committee have now held their own 'Bore ymarfer y Gymraeg' using the Confident/Hyderus board game purchased for them by the initiative, the event was successful with 8 individuals attending and there are arrangements to have similar sessions on a regular basis. A meeting was held to organise a programme of walks and lectures about the area which will start in the spring with the hall committee leading the organising with support from paid officers of the initiative.

3.1.5 **Immersion Centres**- By developing our partnership with the education department, we have started to reach out to new families who send their children to the immersion centres in order to create a system of support for the entire family, not just the pupil, with the aim of this resulting in those families coming closer to the Welsh language and using it. Part of this support is giving presentations to parents, presentations about the history of the language, the current situation, where to go for support and where to use it locally.

3.1.6 **Immersion and Ysgol Pont y Gof**- There is an increasing number of children in the immersion centres and how to introduce and welcome these families as units, and attract them to use Welsh, is important. With this in mind, there was a meeting at Ysgol Pont y Gof, in conjunction with the education department to discuss possibilities of carrying out a pilot project there. It was decided that there was a need for an activity that the children would do in Welsh but that parents would also be able to attend and that the activity was to convey messages about Welsh usage in a fun and understandable way, and to include an opportunity for parents to chat and get information from initiative staff. It was decided that the initiative would take the lead on the work, treat the project as a pilot, and the initiative would then own the scheme. Anni Llŷn was commissioned to create a show, which can be used repeatedly in different schools, which was created in collaboration with pupils at Ysgol Pont y Gof, Botwnnog, using their experiences as latecomers to the area and the experiences of local first language children welcoming new children to the area. Workshops to create the show with the children have taken place, with the main event to come in the

spring, we will then evaluate the event and the whole project so that it can be refined and offered in other areas.

3.1.7 **Nature-** Four nature walks were held to identify Welsh names and characteristics of different plants, these took place in Bala, Aber Ogwen, Nefyn and Mynydd Llandygai

3.2 **Children and Young People**

3.2.1 **Digital-** Digitally we are grasping the opportunities of drawing in the county's schools and immersion centres, to do activities in Welsh, and the following have been proposed:

- Dim Clem Quiz 2024 (National language initiatives quiz)- for the county's schools- 26 schools and 117 pupils from Gwynedd took part, with Ysgol Pentreuchaf reaching the national round
- Sessions with Karen "Kariad" Owen- self-care sessions, boosting self-confidence and protecting feelings for primary children over Zoom. 10 sessions for 140 pupils.
- Dydd Miwsig Cymru- a digital competition with Osian 'Candelas' judging and a prize of disco by Owain Llŷr visiting the school, 27 schools took part, with Ysgol Rhosgadfan winning!

3.2.2 **Schools-** A wider range was offered to schools in this period because we had the financial capacity to do so due to the departure of a member of staff. Through the work in schools, we try to show the children that Welsh is a language to be used outside of class, a vibrant and modern language that can be used in all walks of life and offers them future opportunities here in Gwynedd. Work with schools included:

- Menter Iaith Gwynedd Secondary School Tour- Tara Bandito holds wellbeing sessions and girls in music in the morning followed by a gig by Tara and local young band Sklark in the afternoon. The tour visited Botwnnog, Glan y Môr, Godre'r Berwyn, Dyffryn Ogwen, Tryfan and Tywyn schools.
- Workshops to create Emojis at Ysgol Eder and Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn
- Rapping sessions by Ed Holden in Bontnewydd and Llanllyfni- 2nd and 3rd prizes of the Dydd Miwsig Cymru competition
- Twmpath gwerin and reading sessions and yard game sessions at Ysgol Hirael
- 'Ready or Not' sessions at Ysgol Llandygai
- A day at Glan Llŷn for the younger pupils of Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn

3.2.3 **Bangor Secondary Schools-** a successful grant application to the lottery community fund has meant that an outdoor scheme for year 8 pupils at Ysgol Tryfan and Ysgol Friars has continued this year, a project that places a value on the Welsh language in the outdoor field.

We attended a careers fair at Ysgol Friars, Bangor, following an invitation from Careers Wales who organised the event. We gave a presentation to all the school's years 7, 8 and 9 children on Welsh in the world of work before they had a chance to meet different employers. We took the opportunity to record some of the employers noting the importance of Welsh to them, and we want to develop this as a joint resource between the

initiative, MSparc, the Council's Language Unit and (depending on final agreement from them) Careers Wales.

3.2.4 The Urdd and Cyngor Gwynedd's Youth Department- during the year a new Urdd community officer was co-funded between the initiative, the Urdd and the Council's youth department. The purpose of the post is to start new village clubs here in Gwynedd.

3.2.5 Llwyfan Llŷn - Theatre club on the Llŷn Peninsula, we started with the initiative's funding paying for the facilitator and venue some years ago, our support continued to reduce gradually and since the Autumn the club is running without subsidy from the Initiative.

3.2.6 Theatr Derek Williams- we want to try and replicate what has happened with Llwyfan Llŷn in Bala and support Theatr Derek Williams to re-start a theatre club that existed before the Covid period. So far there have been two taster sessions and over 100 children have attended.

3.3 Community

Through our community work we seek to empower individuals and communities to take the lead and organise local things in Welsh, as well as organise events that draw communities together, raise prestige and awareness and show what is possible, in this period the following happened:

3.3.1 St David's Day celebration events, Bangor city- The Bangor St David's Day celebrations have grown to be much more than the parade itself, and there are now a series of events being organised in collaboration with different organisations and groups leading on different elements, with Menter Iaith Bangor coordinating. Partners involved in the Bangor St David's Day events include Storiell, Pontio, MSparc, Welsh for Children, Bangor City Council, Y Fran Wen, Bangor First group and the Cathedral. This year has seen new things happen naturally with organisations taking the opportunity to link projects with St David's Day celebrations, examples such as Y Fran Wen going into local schools before the parade doing theatre workshops, a local business (The Garth Pub) going into a local primary school to do a cake workshop and MSparc on the road running art workshops to create the giant dragon that was at the front of the march. We therefore see that Menter Iaith Bangor's work is bearing fruit in the city and events for people to use Welsh happen due to the partnership work of the initiative

3.3.2 Regular Sessions for Learners- Paned a Moidyr (Bangor), Peint a Sgwrs (Bangor)- regular sessions for learners- events that are supported by us, but are also dependent on volunteers and can take place without staff members attending, which is the ideal we aim for with learner sessions, and other activities, across the county.

- 3.3.3 **Clonc a Lonc, Bangor**- a light jogging exercise club every two weeks with the emphasis on enjoying and talking rather than running fast
- 3.3.4 **Walks for Learners**- Our walks for learners remain hugely popular, and while there is a feeling that this is heavy in terms of staff time, there is clear feedback from learners that these are thoroughly enjoyed and vital to add to their classroom learning experience and to get to understand and feel part of their local communities. We aim to develop these with more volunteer leaders in the future.
- 3.3.5 **North Wales Africa Society**- a series of 'Croeso i'r Gymraeg' events organised for members of the society and similar sessions for Adfer service users in the Bangor area.
- 3.3.6 **Rhosgadfan**- support recent meetings discussing the future of the Cae Gors centre in the village, in particular how the resource can be used as a boost for the Welsh language and to assimilate new arrivals in the area.
- 3.3.7 **Community Workshops/ Priority Areas**- as can be seen quite a bit of our work focuses on a few areas- Llŷn, Bangor/ Ogwen and Penllyn. We do this to be able to work at a local level to create a difference that we will eventually be able to evidence, but we emphasise that the Menter Iaith is here to Promote the Welsh language across the whole of Gwynedd and the intention is to externalise to increase capacity that will enable us to focus on all areas.

In terms of our priority areas, we have run Community Workshops in Bala, Botwnnog and Bethesda, there has been a great response from the local communities, over 90 individuals attending across the 3 workshops, and we will be actively developing action plans locally for these areas.

3.3.8 **Community Initiatives**- collaborating with all the community initiatives in Gwynedd is a priority for us, and certainly not duplicating their work but rather supporting them to promote the Welsh language in their local areas. We are proud to be part of Cymunedoli-Gwynedd's new network of community initiatives.

3.3.9 **Work with Partners**- it is only by working together that we can increase the use of Welsh in Gwynedd, the initiative is proud to be members of the Gwynedd Language Forum, administered by the Language Unit with the Menter Iaith currently chairing. Similarly, we are proud to be part of Gwynedd's education language forum and look forward to strengthening our involvement with the education department to increase the use of Welsh as a community language.

4. The future

Menter Iaith Gwynedd has developed and evolved over the past year, and this will accelerate during 2023-24.

4.1 Transferring to being an independent entity

- this will be completed by the end of March 2025

4.1.2 The Menter Iaith's revamped Business Plan- we have developed a business plan. Additional funding was attracted by the Big Lottery community fund, Grymuso Gwynedd, Cyngor Gwynedd's Economy Department and Cyngor Gwynedd's Youth Department. We have been involved in successful applications by Mentrau Iaith Cymru to the Arfor challenge fund. We will be aiming for lottery funds during 24-25, as well as identifying commercial gaps the revamped Menter Iaith can consider filling by offering commercial services.

4.2 24-25 Priorities

4.2.1 Priority Areas- We will support communities across the county, but we will focus some of our work in the Penllyn, Pen Llŷn, Bangor, Dyffryn Ogwen and Felinheli areas.

4.2.2 Priority Audiences- Children and young people, and getting Welsh-speaking children to use the language, is a priority. There is also a need to work together to attract newcomers who are adults to the Welsh language.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the committee accept and note the report.