



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, TUESDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 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

Hefin Underwood
Vacant Seat

Aelodau Ex-officio / Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

Other Invited Member

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

AGENDA

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 25 June 2024 be signed as a true record (attached)

5. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN - ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT 11 - 16

To present information of the Environment Department's contribution to the Language Strategy.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN - FINANCE DEPARTMENT 17 - 20

To present information about the contribution of the Finance Department to promote and further the Welsh Language.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN - HIGHWAYS, ENGINEERING AND YGC DEPARTMENT 21 - 27

To present information about the implementation of the Language Policy and activities to promote the Welsh language.

8. ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS TO DISCUSS GWYNEDD'S EDUCATION LANGUAGE POLICY 28

To elect 5 representatives from the Language Committee to attend the Engagement Sessions.

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE: 25 JUNE 2024

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Meryl Roberts, Peter Thomas, Menna Baines, Anne Lloyd Jones, Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Cai Larsen, Llio Elenid Owen, Jina Gwyrfai, Alan Jones Evans, Elfed Williams and Rhys Tudur.

Officers: Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser), Llio Mai Dafydd and Bet Huws (Welsh Language Learning and Development Officers) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Menna Trenholme (Cabinet Member for Corporate Support).

Item 7: Alun Gwilym Williams (Senior Business Manager, Adults, Health and Well-being Department) and Aled Gibbard (Assistant Head of Resources, Children and Supporting Families Department)

Item 9: Meirion Macintyre Huws (Welsh Language Promotion Project Officer)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Resolved to elect Councillor Menna Baines as chair of the Welsh Language Committee for the year 2024/25.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Resolved to elect Councillor Meryl Roberts as Vice-chair of the Welsh Language Committee for the year 2024/25.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Gwynfor Owen and Nia Haf Lewis (Language Consultant).

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

5. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee which took place on 23 April 2024, as a true record.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN - SOCIAL SERVICES

The report was submitted by the Senior Business Manager and the Assistant Head of Resources. Attention was drawn briefly to the following main points, noting that the Report scoped the work of the Children and Supporting Families Department, as well as the Adults, Health and Well-being Department.

It was explained that the Report scoped the work of both departments for the first time because the Public Services Corporate Director led on a 'More than words' project within the Care field.

The development of the Care Academy to try and cope with recruitment challenges that the Care field had recently faced was reported on. Details were given on the recruitment struggles impacting Local Authorities across the country, with specific challenges in some fields and geographical areas. It was emphasised that the aim of the Academy was to help individuals to develop themselves and highlight clear career pathways within the care field. It was explained that they hoped to meet these targets by offering support and training to ensure that individuals qualify to become carers through the medium of Welsh whether for the positions of Occupational Therapists, Home Manager or any other aspect of the field of care. Pride was expressed on the development of this plan because Welsh language training was not currently available on all aspects of the field, such as apprenticeships. It was explained that the academy currently existed virtually but it was hoped to have a specific location in the future.

It was acknowledged that both departments had faced recruitment challenges, noting that the problem intensified when attempting to appoint more specialist posts who had the necessary language skills. Attention was drawn to the fact that there was a specific challenge in the nursing home and residential care field as it was not possible to recruit quickly enough to meet the demand for the services. It was emphasised that departments ensured that they continued to offer training and support for all workers who needed help with the Welsh language and noted that filling vacant posts and resolving the recruitment challenges was a priority for them. Assurance was given that care providers received the Council's support to ensure that workers had specific time within working hours to nurture their Welsh language skills. However, it was acknowledged that this procedure depended on those providers acting as required.

It was elaborated that the Children and Supporting Families Department had had some success with recruitment campaigns recently, but it was acknowledged that challenges were still seen in the Meirionnydd area. It was noted that another challenge was to ensure Welsh language residential placements for children who wished this as all the residential placements were currently owned by the private sector. It was emphasised that the Council had plans to develop internal residential placements. It was acknowledged that the department had followed the Council's recruitment processes and considered applicants with lower language skills if the post was advertised for the third time. If someone with lower language skills was offered the job, it was ensured that a Welsh training programme was implemented at the beginning of the individual's employment. Both departments had emphasised that they had been making an effort to use agency staff as little as possible.

Assurance was given that the departments were proactive in resolving these recruitment challenges, detailing a number of projects that had been underway to attract social workers such as the Care Academy, trainee scheme, awareness raising, social media, a purposeful section for the care sector on the jobs website, promoting the benefits of working for the council and also to encourage young people to consider social care as a rewarding career.

Members were reminded of the 'AskSARA' company service which provided support to adults after users completed a self-assessment of the support that they needed. It was noted that this service was one that was being used by a number of Local Authorities nationally. It was elaborated that the system had historically been available in Welsh but that this element of the self-assessment had been very defective. It was confirmed that the Adults services had been collaborating with the company to develop a correct Welsh language element to this service and ensure that it was accessible to all users whilst reducing the likelihood of difficulties arising. It was noted that this work ensured that more people received access to support through the medium of Welsh and they were proud that the department had taken a leading role on this work which was used by AskSARA users across Wales.

It was reported that a Flying Start provision had been developed, noting that there were now 22 childcare providers through the medium of Welsh or bilingual within the scheme, as well as an app development for scheme users. It was emphasised that every provider offered care through the medium of Welsh with the option to offer bilingual care in English when appropriate. This was reiterated by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, confirming that both departments offered Welsh language services proactively by providing services in English following applications.

It was mentioned that the Children and Supporting Families Department had collaborated with CWLWM to provide Welsh language support to nurseries, cylchoedd meithrin, childminders and after school clubs. Attention was drawn to grants available for new childminders who were non-Welsh speaking, to enable them to buy the equivalent of £100 of Welsh language resources for their provision. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that there would be further information on the number of individuals who had taken advantage of this grant and on the materials, as well as the number of Welsh language Flying Start care providers with the members following the meeting.

Pride was expressed that the AiDi app had now received consideration for regional and national adoption. Members were reminded that this Welsh app was an innovative app for unpaid young carers as it was an effective method of sharing information and allowed them to contact the school when needed. It was emphasised that the feedback for this app had been very supportive. It was reiterated that an additional app was desired to be developed to support individuals with autism. There was a desire for this bilingual app to be developed by the end of March 2025 after receiving recent grant money.

It was explained that approximately 1,600 staff had been employed across the social services. It was noted that 73.4% of them had completed a language assessment, with 85.5% of those meeting the language requirements of their posts. It was acknowledged that the departments recognised that there was a pattern to these results as a larger proportion of office workers completed the self-assessment compared to front-line staff. It was confirmed that it was a priority for the departments to encourage managers to implement the self-assessment with front-line workers over the coming months to ensure more complete data collection of the linguistic levels of department staff offering Welsh language skills support to any member of staff who wished to receive it, or who needed to attend training as a result of the self-assessment.

Gratitude was expressed for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and note the observations received.

8. CYNGOR GWYNEDD ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

The report was presented by the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser, and she briefly drew attention to the following main points:

It was reported that the report provided factual information required to be published by the Council in accordance with the requirements of the Language Standards under Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.

It was noted that the Standards set out some specific requirements for annual reporting, emphasising the expectation to confirm:

- Number of complaints received during the year
- Number of staff who possessed Welsh language skills at the end of the year
- Number of staff who attended training courses offered by the Council through the medium of Welsh during the year
- Number of new posts and vacant posts advertised by the Council, where Welsh language skills were noted as an essential skill for the role.

A summary of the report was provided, confirming that 98.9% of Council staff had some degree of Welsh language skills. In response to an enquiry, the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer confirmed that the minimum job designation level in Welsh stated that it was a requirement for individuals to be able to greet and answer simple questions verbally, confirming that this was what this figure reflected. It was also noted that 92% of Council staff reached the language designation of their post.

They went on to confirm that 850 job advertisements had been published during the year, with Welsh language skills being essential to the role.

Attention was drawn to the fact that 22 staff members had completed access training, which was the initial language level training. It was noted that six individuals went on to complete foundation training as well as six individuals who completed the intermediate level. It was emphasised that this was not an indication that individuals did not continue with their training, but instead, it reflected the fact that job designations varied and not everyone who attended access training was required to continue to the higher levels. However, it was noted that they were welcomed to do so if they had an interest in improving their linguistic skills. In the same manner, pride was expressed that the number of individuals who had shown interest in receiving language refresher training was on the rise.

Reference was made to additional information seen in the report on developments during the year to improve compliance with the Language Standards, including:

- Specific steps to promote the new Language Policy adopted in 2022.
- Information on the new Language Strategy published at the end of 2023 which set out the Council's vision of increasing the use of the Welsh language across the county.
- Information about the work of the More Than Words in-house forum.
- Bilingual Workforce Recruitment Project.

It was explained that there was no reference to Menter Iaith Gwynedd in the report as they worked with Gwynedd communities instead of detailing on the use and compliance of the Language Standards.

Thanks was expressed for the report.

RESOLVED

- **To accept the report and note the observations received.**
- **Recommend that the Cabinet Member publishes the report before the 30 June 2024 deadline.**

9. CYNGOR GWYNEDD PLACE NAMES PROJECT

The report was presented by the Welsh Language Promotion Project Officer and attention was briefly drawn to the following main points:

Members were reminded that the project was established in 2021 following increasing concerns over a number of years that Welsh names were being lost. It was noted that one of the project's main developments was the Cyngor Gwynedd Place Name Map. It was explained that it noted local names of places within the county, such as fields, roads, buildings, areas and rivers which were used verbally but had not been recorded in official maps. Details were given that the map continued to be populated with new names following workshops in 15 primary schools and 1 secondary school. Individuals with correct information about Welsh local names in their area were encouraged to contact the Officer to populate the map in even more detail.

Attention was drawn to several projects underway to raise awareness of the importance of local names and the historical, linguistic and cultural richness that they included. It was elaborated that the Officer published 'Yr Enw a'r Hanes' articles internally to Council staff to note the history of a place name within the County. Pride was expressed that this was the page that received the most visitors of all the Intranet pages.

It was reported that the project had been very active during the week of the 2023 National Eisteddfod in Boduan. It was noted that the Officer was a member of a national discussion panel accompanied by Jeremy Miles MS (Minister for the Welsh Language) and Dr Dylan Foster Evans (Welsh Place-Name Society) to continue discussions on legal arrangements and policies in this field. Reference was also made to a discussion held on local names in the Babel Lân at the Eisteddfod. Pride was expressed that this discussion held by the Officer had been broadcasted on S4C as part of the Eisteddfod's programme of the best of the festival (Goreuon yr Ŵyl). It was added that the Officer had been discussing the matter on BBC Radio Cymru by having a four-month contract to discuss local accents and names.

Reference was made to an application that came before the project to try to ensure that Welsh-only names were put on street signs. It was emphasised that the Officer had been investigating the process of renovating all signs, confirming that this would be too costly to implement. However, it was confirmed that the project had adopted an alternative project. Details were given that one of the main aims of this project was to install new signs for locations and areas, such as Twthill (Caernarfon), Lôn Rocar (Llandygai) and Lôn Groes (Pistyll), where there were no existing signs. It was considered that this would make the Welsh language more visible in the county.

Additional projects were mentioned which focused on installing signs such as:

- Erection of signs marking the old Welsh names of some of the streets in Caernarfon (in association with Caernarfon Civic Society)
- Welsh only signs erected in Trefor due to a number of missing signs

- Installation of signs when arriving at former districts/communities on 'A' roads in the County following public interest in seeing 'Llŷn' and 'Eifionydd' signs for the National Eisteddfod.

It was explained that, historically, Town Councils did not have the right to put up monolingual Welsh signs welcoming visitors there. Pride was expressed that, as a result of discussions with the Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government, the officer had succeeded in obtaining the right to allow Welsh-only signs for this use.

Reference was made to the Enwau Gwynedd app currently in development which will be made available to Council staff via the intranet. This would enable staff to assist by correcting any spelling or error in place names. It was explained that the aim was to reconcile the name that the Council used in correspondence.

It was explained that Council Departments worked closely with the Officer on several projects. An example was shared that he advised Building Control on matters relating to street and properties names as well as schools and estates when they received requests to change place names from Welsh to English. Reference was made to the 'Enwi eiddo - Ymarfer Da' booklet developed by the Officer to encourage people to keep the Welsh names of their properties. It was elaborated that the Officer sent a letter out to individuals who wished to change the name of their house from a Welsh name to English in an effort to convince them of a Welsh name that they could use instead. However, it was acknowledged that the Council did not have the power to stop these changes if the owners wished to proceed. Furthermore, it was noted that Welsh names were used on 94% of all new houses built since 2020 but it was confirmed that requests to change house names from Welsh to English remained a challenge.

It was elaborated that the Officer collaborated with the Departments on matters regarding street names, be that misspellings, misuse or other requests. It was explained that this was interesting work as there were 172 different systems used across the Council by different services and the street name data needed to be reconciled to ensure that the systems used the same addresses in the future as the teams' software was updated. It was noted that the 'Local Land and Property Gazetteer' could be used if a street name needed to be confirmed, further using the Welsh name in any attempt to modify the official use for the area.

It was confirmed that the Officer continued to collaborate with external bodies and organisations on a number of different aspects. It was noted that he was a member of the Welsh Place Names Forum, where representatives from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office, the Welsh Government, Eryri National Park and some from other local authorities met to protect local names. It was noted that the Officer consistently encouraged legislative change within these meetings. It was elaborated that the Officer was also working with mapping Wales in the hope of developing Welsh digital maps as the foundation for Cyngor Gwynedd's maps but it was acknowledged that a number of challenges with licences derived from this.

It was reported that the project had been operational since 2021 and was funded until April 2025. Consideration was given to ask the Language Initiative whether they would be eager to adopt the work if the campaign to get an extension for the project was unsuccessful.

Thanks was given for the report.

RESOLVED

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

- **Recommend and support the Cabinet Member to try and find resources to extend the period of the project to ensure the development and continuity of the service.**

The meeting commenced at 10:00am and concluded at 11:40am.

CHAIR

MEETING	Language Committee
DATE	22 October 2024
TITLE	Report of the Environment Department
PURPOSE	Present information on the Environment Department's contribution to the Language Strategy
AUTHOR	Dafydd Wyn Williams, Head of Environment Department

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide information to the Language Committee about the Environment Department's contribution to the Council's Language Strategy.
- 1.2. The Environment Department includes a range of services across the fields of Waste and Recycling, Transport, Planning and Public Protection.
- 1.3. The nature of these services means that staff come into contact regularly with members of the public, councillors, other Council staff, and other authorities and external partners.
- 1.4. As a Department, every effort is made to ensure that the services are provided in the customer's preferred language, and there is effort by the Department's officers to promote the use of the Welsh language through their work.
- 1.5. We will highlight in the report the work that is taking place across the Department to promote and advance the language, any plans that are afoot in the field and identify any challenges that exist.

2. RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

1. What policies and plans are in place within your department to contribute to the objectives of the language strategy? Identify the priority area (early years, learning, work and service, community or research and technology)

Relevant policies and strategic plans / Projects in the Council plan

Local Development Plan

The work of the Planning Policy Team is mainly concerned with the preparation, monitoring, review and revision of the Joint Local Development Plan (2011-26) including the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance. Consideration of the Welsh language has been central to the preparation of the Plan which incorporates Planning Policy PS1 which relates specifically to the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

The Supplementary Planning Guidance (maintaining and creating distinctive and sustainable communities) also contains detailed guidance on how to consider the Welsh language when dealing with applications for new development. Through this work, the Plan contributes to promoting and supporting the Welsh language in the Gwynedd Planning Authority area.

The process of preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP), which is one of the Priorities under the Gwynedd Werdd theme in the Council's Plan 2023 – 2028, has commenced with a Delivery Agreement agreed with the Welsh Government. In preparing the new LDP, the Planning Policy Team will continue to prioritise this key area.

Article 4 Direction

The work involved in introducing an Article 4 Direction is also included in the Council Plan, as part of the Gwynedd Glyd-themed 'Second home management and short-term holiday accommodation' project. The aim of this work is to try to reverse the social inequality that exists in some of Gwynedd's communities, seeking to ensure that provision of housing (including affordable housing) is available to meet local need.

The Article 4 justification paper states: *'In relation to the Welsh language, creating sustainable communities where the Welsh language is fully immersed within communities, and providing and replicating the necessary social context for using the Welsh language as part of the normal fabric of society, is essential in order to protect and encourage the growth of the Welsh language. With the Welsh Government's commitment to reach one million Welsh speakers by 2050, the ability to have better control over the housing stock and thereby seek to ensure that there is adequate and affordable provision of housing for local people is a means of supporting this aim.'* It is hoped that there will be better control of the housing stock and thus an attempt to ensure that there is adequate and affordable provision of housing for local people to assist the aim of supporting the language to grow.

Other projects and schemes

Planning, Planning Policy and Building Control

When dealing with any planning application, decisions are made in accordance with the Joint Local Development Plan, which includes a specific Welsh language policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance which provides detailed guidance on how to implement the policy.

By acting in this way, the Planning Service contributes towards promoting the Welsh language in the area, ensuring that applications take the Welsh language into account.

During the period of April 2023 to March 2024, 1 Linguistic Assessment and 17 Linguistic Statements were received with determined applications that met the thresholds within Planning Policy PS 1. In addition, in accordance with Annex 5 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance, consideration has been given to the Welsh language for applications falling below the threshold of those requiring a formal Statement or Assessment.

Three planning applications were rejected partly due to various language issues, and 13 planning applications were granted permission with a planning condition for language mitigation measures. These included that any new name should be derived from historical, geographical or local links to the area where possible.

This ties in with the Place Name Protection project to which several Services from the Environment Department contribute, including the Planning and Building Control Service.

The Planning Service has been collaborating with the Council's Language Unit on the work of Y Gymraeg mewn Busnes. A note that raises awareness and also offers advice goes out with pre-application advice responses and an information note is also available for officers to use on planning decisions. A planning condition was introduced for any new housing developments to secure a Welsh name for the house or estate.

During 2023/24, a condition was set on 35 planning permissions which ensures a Welsh name on new businesses and over 120 new houses.

Landscape and Nature

Much of the officers' work in the area of Landscape and Nature means that they work closely with the public, and facilitating access to our natural environment is an integral part of their work.

Biodiversity officers carry out regular work to encourage interest and promote nature, with nature discovery events in collaboration with partners in nature reserves. These events offer an opportunity to run activities for families introducing Welsh terms and names for creatures, plants etc.

Public Protection

There are 3 Public Protection Services (Pollution and Licensing; Food and Safety and Trading Standards) that provide bilingual campaign materials, and application forms are all offered through the medium of Welsh.

Policies such as the Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 recognise the need for businesses to consider the Welsh language and factors relevant to an area's culture when applying for an alcohol licence, and when running a business.

Waste and Recycling

Recycling officers undertake regular work promoting services and encouraging residents to make the most of material recycling methods. All the information and publicity material produced is bilingual, with priority to the Welsh language.

Officers attend events to promote these services and they communicate and present in Welsh unless the residents' preferred language requires them to discuss bilingually or in English.

The promotion material produced ensures the use of clear Welsh, and all the internal messages for the workforce are provided bilingually, with priority to the Welsh language.

Road Safety

Road Safety officers visit schools and locations across the county educating and promoting safety in walking and cycling. These visits are conducted in person and take place through the medium of Welsh unless a member of the public's chosen language requires communication in English. The team also promote their work bilingually on websites and social media.

During the 2023/24 academic year, the team delivered face-to-face training to a total of 5,890 children and young people (538 through the Kerbcraft safety scheme, 672 on cycle training and 4,680 overall road safety).

2. What more needs to be addressed in the next year to raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh?

As noted above, work on the new Local Development Plan will go ahead, full consideration will be given to the Welsh language, and that is set out within the Delivery Agreement for the Plan. Showing how consideration has been given to the Welsh language at specific stages of the process will start with the Preferred Strategy Document.

Training and language skills development and enhancement courses are highlighted in regular messages to Department staff, and efforts will continue to highlight the opportunities available in this area. This includes sharing messages with office staff, and also frontline staff, some of whom do not have access to the Council's Staff Intranet in their day-to-day work.

3. Has the development of technology interfered with your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh? If applicable please provide an example. How do you ensure that the development of technology does not affect your ability to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Overall, the trend is that any external systems that are purchased are only available in English. But by working closely with the Council's Information Technology Service, we are successfully ensuring that the public-facing system is bilingual.

4. How do you keep a record of the people who use your service through the medium of Welsh? Can you share relevant data?

Details of the chosen language of members of the public and key stakeholders are set out to ensure that any correspondence is provided in the language preferred by the recipient.

We always ensure that any initial correspondence is provided bilingually, with Welsh first, to try to encourage and promote the use of the language wherever possible.

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

The latest figures show that 336 of Environment Department staff have completed a self-assessment or where an assessment has been completed by a manager/ team leader for staff who do not have easy access to a staff intranet, namely 81.4% of Department staff.

It is good to report that an increase has been seen in the number of Department staff with a language assessment compared to the situation a year ago. Historically, many Waste Services staff did not have a language designation assessment. But thankfully there has been a positive effort to identify staff's language skills over the past year, which will continue as we look to ensure that an assessment is completed for all staff over the coming months.

The Department has also been in discussions with the Council's Language Learning and Development Officer to consider the suitability of the language levels of the waste workforce to ensure that the requirements are aligned with the responsibilities of their day-to-day jobs.

According to the latest figures, 83.6% of staff who have been assessed are meeting their job language designations. The Department has been in discussions with the Council's Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer to consider the suitability of the language levels of the waste workforce and whether the requirements marry with the day-to-day responsibilities of their posts.

However, it should be noted that just because a member of staff does not meet the language requirements does not mean they are unable to offer a Welsh language service, and the Department promotes any opportunities for staff to attend training to develop language skills or a refresher.

It is pleasing to report that a member of staff from the Recycling Team passed the Language Skills Certificate with Bangor University during the past year. In addition, officers from biodiversity and public protection have attended language refresher courses, and a member of the parking team is currently taking a Welsh language learning course.

6. Please provide examples of any obstacles, complaints and commendations associated with the provision and promotion of Welsh-medium services.

As previously noted, many of the external computer systems used by Department staff tend to be English only. Unfortunately, the development costs that would ensure that the back-office elements are also bilingual are beyond the available budget, which means that the opportunity for staff to use Welsh when working on systems is curtailed. However, positive collaboration with the Information Technology Service ensures that internal systems are available in Welsh, and any aspect of the public-facing system is completely bilingual.

General Tenders: In all contracts/agreements entered into through the Sell2Wales/e-Tender Wales procurement portal, we continue to strive to ensure that the Welsh language service standard is ensured and maintained. A copy of the Council's Language Policy will be included in the tender documents, which all applicants are asked to read to ensure that they understand what the Welsh language requirements are but also that they understand the importance of Welsh to Cyngor Gwynedd. The language requirements (which reflect the Council's Language Policy) of every contract are determined according to the needs of that contract.

The 'Find a Tender Service' (FTS) tendering service: As public sector organisations are funded by taxpayers' money, it is vital that the procurement procedures is fair, transparent and offer value for money to the taxpayer. When a public sector body wants to buy any goods, works or services over a certain value ("threshold") it must advertise through FTS. FTS does not accept notifications in Welsh only, as English is the mandatory language for this publication, but we arrange bilingual notifications.

Projects / contracts: The engineering industry has a tendency to be English in nature. In order to encourage the use of Welsh during the purchasing process, we ensure that 'invitation to tender' or 'instructions to tender' documents are advertised bilingually.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2023:

[Welsh Language Promotion Plan Environment Department.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)

Meeting	Language Committee
Date	22 October 2024
Title	Welsh Language Promotion Plan – Finance Department
Purpose	Present information about the contribution of Finance Department to promote and further the Welsh language
Author	Dewi Morgan, Head of Finance

1. What policies and plans are in place within your department to contribute to the objectives of the language strategy? Identify the priority area (early years, learning, work and service, community or research and technology)

Projects in the Council's plan

Gwynedd Council Digital Plan 2023/2028

The scheme covers 29 projects to support Gwynedd Council to become a DIGITAL COUNCIL, where technology is used wisely for more economic and effective service delivery, and where the customer is increasingly central in everything we do.

The principles of equality and well-being run throughout the Plan, including the Welsh language and the sustainability element of the Five Ways of Working, with the commitment to include the Welsh language in a Digital Suitability Assessment regime for the installation of any digital development within the Council. The suitability assessment will bring on digital standards published by the Welsh Language Commissioner, implementing them for any internal development or solution procurement by third party companies.

Other projects and schemes

Day-to-day use

We are proud that the whole department provides its services through the Welsh language and we believe that the ability to work day-to-day through the medium of Welsh has been a great help in attracting and appointing new staff. We have evidence that this culture has built the confidence of many of our new staff and strengthened their use of the language.

Audit Wales

Officer from the department hold meetings in Welsh only with Audit Wales staff. We believe this has given Audit Wales the impetus to strengthen their Welsh language arrangements and we believe this has been an opportunity for Audit Wales staff to develop their Welsh as well and make greater use of it.

Training

Gwynedd Council's Finance Department is one of those rare employers offering professional training in finance and information technology through Welsh. We offer Welsh placements for Apprentices and Trainees in the Accounting Service and in the Digital Services.

2. What more needs attention in the next year to raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh?

We believe that the services we provide to the public in the financial areas (e.g. taxation, benefits) are fully bilingual, including the literature and forms we provide. However, we are aware that things are changing very rapidly in the benefits area in relation to collaborating with bodies from outside the Council and we will continue to be vigilant to ensure that the standards are upheld.

In terms of digital matters, it is seen in part 1 above that this is an ever-evolving area and in setting up new systems as needed we will act to ensure compliance with our expectations.

3. Has the development of technology impaired your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh? If applicable please provide an example. How do you ensure that the development of technology does not affect your ability to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language?

The Digital Plan sets out the need to include Welsh in any digital provision, but the digital market is not always supportive of providing bilingual systems. An example of this was seen in Council Tax's self-service provision for the public, where the provision did not greet everything bilingually. Despite these hurdles, we discovered a solution and commissioned work through another 3rd party company that intercepts system details in English, translates it from ready-made translations and presents it to the user in Welsh. This type of technology can be widely used, and the lack of a ready-made solution from a company should not prevent us from introducing bilingual delivery.

There are exceptions to this, for example, Microsoft's long-awaited full product for artificial intelligence (Copilot) does not include Welsh as a supported language, and as a result, opportunities for diverting tasks such as preparing minutes through this medium are being lost for meetings held in Welsh.

4. How do you keep a record of the people who use your service through the medium of Welsh? Can you share relevant data?

The majority of services offered by the Department relate to supporting other Council departments and supporting them to provide services to the rest of the Council.

However, the department is able to influence the services we offer and support the Welsh language through the Council.

Digital Services

All corporately delivered laptops are provided with the operating system set up in Welsh. Further statistics will be collected to check the number who choose to continue with the Welsh setting or proceed to change it to English.

The laptops provided by the Digital Learning Service are provided with the operating platform in Welsh, but no installation has been provided for measuring if the setting is changed. Developmental work is underway with the HWB team in Welsh Government to enable a means of reporting into the future.

Pensions Administration

We have introduced a new self-service system for the pension fund in April this year. The Gwynedd Pension Fund was the first fund in Wales to upgrade to the new site and we had to help the company develop the Welsh version of the site. This was quite a lot of work, but this site will now be used across Wales as the other funds upgrade.

The Powys Pension Fund is also using the web site now. We are continuing to develop the system and additional elements will be introduced to the site in the coming months, with the remaining Welsh funds moving over the next few years.

5. What are your staff's language skills?

The latest Language Designations report was provided in September 2024, using data as at 2nd September. The report notes that 218 Finance Department staff have completed a language self-assessment, making up 99.5% of the workforce – this is the highest percentage of any department. Only 1 member of staff hadn't submitted a self-assessment on that day and we've followed up on that immediately.

Of the 218 who have submitted a self-assessment, 99.1%, which is 216 reached their job language designation. In other words, only two members of staff have concluded that they do not meet their job designation but we maintain support for these officers to support them to improve their language skills.

Over the past year two members of staff have undertaken language training. A degree apprentice undertook an Improving Working Welsh Writing course at Nant Gwrtheyrn to further develop her language skills.

A Programmer/Analyst at the Digital Service has also been taking weekly Welsh lessons at Foundation level. He plans to keep going with the lessons.

6. Please provide examples of any obstacles, complaints and commendations associated with the provision and promotion of Welsh-medium services.

Payroll Service

There was a case at the Payroll Unit in October 2023 where a complaint was received from a member of the public as she had received an SSP1 Employer Form in monolingual English and when she enquired about a Welsh form, it was noted that a Welsh form was not available; that was information was incorrect. SSP1 is not a Cyngor Gwynedd form, but an HM Revenue and Customs one. However, a Welsh version of this form was available.

Following this, the processes at the Payroll Unit were reviewed to ensure that all officers knew that this form was available in Welsh as well as English. A Welsh and English form is now sent in cases of this nature, in accordance with the Council's Language Policy. Furthermore, following this incident the service carried out a review of all forms from external bodies it sent out to employees and former employees, to ensure that Welsh as well as English versions were distributed.

Pensions Service

The Service has generally received very good feedback about the new self-service site (see Part 4 above). Here's one comment from the feedback we've received from the Welsh part:

'Very easy to log in and in Welsh - excellent.'

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2023:
[Welsh Language Promotion Plan Finance Department.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)

MEETING	Language Committee
DATE	22 October, 2024
DEPARTMENT	Highways, Engineering and YGC Department
PURPOSE	Present information about the implementation of the Language Policy and activities to promote the Welsh language
AWDUR	Steffan Jones, Highways, Engineering and YGC Department

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report was prepared in response to the Language Committee's request for information about how the Department of Highways, Engineering and YGC implements the Language Policy and what activities it does to promote the Welsh language.
- 1.2 The Department includes a range of services including road maintenance, street lighting, municipal asset maintenance, street cleaning, bereavement service as well as multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy. The Department is also responsible for managing all the Council's fleet and for operating the environmental category management procurement service.
- 1.3 Due to the nature of the Department's work, it is inevitable that most of our staff will come into contact with members of the public. As a result, the majority of them are expected to at least be able to speak Welsh to an acceptable level in order to be able to deal directly with inquiries and, thereby, provide a better experience for our customers.
- 1.4 However, as the Department has so many front-line workers, it has historically been difficult to determine exactly how many meet the language designations of their job. However, the Department has largely overcome this during the last 12 months as explained in the report.

2. RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S INQUIRIES

2. Pa bolisïau a chynlluniau sydd mewn lle o fewn eich adran er mwyn cyfrannu at amcanion y strategaeth iaith? Nodwch y maes blaenoriaeth (blynyddoedd cynnar, dysgu, gwaith a gwasanaeth, y gymuned neu ymchwil a thechnoleg)

e.e

Enw

Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg (Blynyddoedd cynnar a dysgu):

Mae'r maes hwn yn cael sylw penodol yng Nghynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg (CSGA) ac mae mesurau penodol wedi eu llunio i fonitro cynnydd.

Crynodeb byr

Sicrheir bod pob lleoliad Blynnyddoedd Cynnar yn gosod sylfaen gadarn ar gyfer y Gymraeg, a sicrhau fod pob plentyn yn cael asesiad sgiliau iaith, Llythrennedd a Chyfathrebu yn y Gymraeg ar fynediad ac ar derfyn addysg feithrin rhan amser ac ar ddiwedd y Cyfnod Sylfaen.

Relevant strategic policies and plans

Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023 – 2033.

Projects in the Council's plan

Tomorrow's Gwynedd

Assuring suitable facilities and playing fields that are available for children and young people in their leisure time (clear and correct signage).

A Green Gwynedd

Acting on flood risks and clean and tidy communities - as part of this work we will promote the use of the Welsh language and increase the opportunity to use the Welsh language when discussing technical issues in the field of flooding.

Other projects and plans

Internal communication with Highways, Engineering and YGC Department Staff

We regularly produce a Highways, Engineering and YGC Newsletter, as well as a YGC Bulletin, and these are circulated to all the Department's staff in Welsh. These are appreciated, not only for their informative content, but also for their quality and use of clear Welsh.

Careers and Job Awareness Events

YGC are experienced in setting up stalls at major local and national events to raise awareness of their services in civil engineering and construction, and to advertise career opportunities. This year was no different with stalls being erected at the Anglesey Show and career events organised in partnership with Darogan Talent.

The Department was very active during the Show including running flood awareness themed activities and competitions. These were ideal opportunities to impress upon young people that they could have a fulfilling career in these fields through the medium of Welsh and, through this, retain talent locally.

3. Beth arall sydd angen sylw yn ystod y flwyddyn nesaf er mwyn codi statws y Gymraeg a sicrhau cyfleoedd i bobl i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg?

(e.e. addysg, adnoddau, teuluoedd, hyrwyddo defnydd o wasanaeth drwy'r Gymraeg)

Qualification and Membership Mentor for the Professional Body of the Institution of Civil Engineers

In addition to the careers events mentioned above, YGC is closely associated with the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), which is the leading professional engineering institution that awards professional qualifications to civil engineers. One of the service's engineers has been appointed as a mentor for the Council and the support that they offer in Welsh has been extended to include engineers at Anglesey and Conwy Councils.

Representation on the North Wales ICE Graduate Student Technicians board

Three engineers from the YGC service are members of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) North Wales Graduate Student Technicians board, including our Assistant Engineer who is Chair of the group and reports on technical issues to other groups across the UK when meet at the ICE office in London several times a year.

Communication service to stakeholders on behalf of UK Highways

YGC is continuing to provide a communication service to stakeholders on behalf of UK Highways for the section of the A55 between Llandygai and Holyhead. This means preparing important bilingual messages about maintenance work etc. As part of the service, they also organise and attend 'drop-in' meetings locally to share information as needed. UK Highways commissioned YGC specifically because of their expertise in the field and the ability of staff to communicate in Welsh.

Organising 'drop in' events relating to YGC projects

YGC also organises numerous 'drop-in' events in Gwynedd and beyond to inform residents about proposed schemes and receive their views on them. These events are conducted bilingually at all times.

Collaboration with Local Business – Subcontractors

Our Environment Category Team has attended three business events across the county over the past few months which were organised by the Council's Business Support Team. The aim is to raise awareness about opportunities for local Subcontractors to register on the Council's Subcontractors list, or to provide a service through the Council's frameworks. The team is very keen to engage and give companies the opportunity to register. They have developed a guide to assist a company to register on the SellWales and eTenderWales system. The team has also created an item in the Council's Business Support Bulletin which is shared weekly, and it is intending to hold an event at Adra's Tŷ Gwyrddfai Penygroes in December in collaboration with other Council departments, Adra Tai Cyf and other companies.

4. Ydy datblygiad technoleg wedi amharu ar eich gallu i ddarparu cyfleoedd i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg? Os yn berthnasol rhowch enghraifft. Sut ydych chi'n sicrhau nad yw datblygiad technoleg yn effeithio ar eich gallu i ddarparu cyfleoedd i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg?

Cyngor Gwynedd's Fleet Service Asset Management System

Rather than purchasing commercial systems operating exclusively in English, the Fleet Service has developed its own systems for managing the Council's fleet assets through the medium of Welsh. The systems appear in Welsh first and users must choose an option to operate in English. We are not aware of any other fleet systems offering these services in Welsh.

Project Websites

YGC's Business Development team provides specific websites for project information during the project consultation and construction phase. This provision enables the service to ensure that the websites are created and maintained with bilingual content. These websites use a template from WordPress which has a 'plug-in' for a toggle button which enables the user to choose the language.

5. Sut ydych chi'n cadw cofnod o'r bobl sy'n defnyddio eich gwasanaeth trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg? Allwch chi rannu data perthnasol?

e.e.

Blynyddoedd cynnar

- 1. Data cyrhaeddiad y CSGA o ran nifer y lleoliadau gofal plant, a nifer plant sydd yn derbyn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.*
- 2. Nifer cylchoedd Ti a Fi, grwpiau Rhiant a Phlentyn sydd yn cael eu cefnogi/cynnal.*
- 3. Nifer y gweithgareddau sydd yn cael eu targedu yn benodol at deuluoedd ifanc/rhieni a babanod gan wasanaethau'r Cyngor.*
- 4. Nifer y gweithgareddau teuluol sydd yn cael eu trefnu gan y fenter iaith.*
- 5. Nifer ymgyrchoedd rhannu adnoddau a gwybodaeth.*

Dysgu

1. Ystadegau monitro CSGA
2. Nifer staff y Cyngor sydd yn derbyn hyfforddiant i wella sgiliau
3. Nifer prentisiaethau sydd yn cael eu cynnig gan y Cyngor
4. Nifer cyfleoedd hyfforddi/achrediadau sydd yn cael eu cynnig gan y gwasanaeth ieuencid.

Gwaith a gwasanaeth

1. Nifer busnesau sydd yn derbyn cymorth ariannol drwy gynllun Arfor
2. Nifer staff sydd yn derbyn cefnogaeth i ddysgu Cymraeg neu ddatblygu sgiliau
3. Nifer staff sydd yn cymryd rhan mewn cynlluniau cyfeillio/pencampwyr

Y gymuned

1. Nifer gweithgareddau wedi eu cynnal gan wasanaethau'r Cyngor a'r fenter iaith ar gyfer gwahanol grwpiau
2. Nifer mentrau cymunedol sydd yn cael eu cefnogi drwy gynlluniau Adfywio ac Economi

Ymchwil a thechnoleg

1. Nifer prosiectau ymchwil sydd wedi eu cynnal gan y Cyngor, neu eu comisiynu gan y Cyngor

Unrhyw ddata arall perthnasol

Learning / Work and service

The number of staff in the department who receive training to improve skills

The department receives details about training to improve Language skills on a quarterly basis from the Council's Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer. This message is shared with the department's staff via email. The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer keeps a record of the number of staff receiving training and provides an update to the Head of Department on a quarterly basis.

A number of staff have attended training on improving their language skills, the interest in improving language skills is very good across the department.

- One member of staff has completed an Intermediate level 1 Course with Learning Welsh, and has registered for level 2.
- One member of staff registered for an Intermediate level 1 Course with Learning Welsh.
- One member of staff is following a 'Using' Refreshing Writing course with Nant Gwrtheyrn through the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme.
- Two members of staff are following the Language Skills Certificate course with Bangor University, with 1 having passed his exam.
- One member of staff has shown an interest in a Magu Hyder course and awaiting Dysgu Cymraeg to forward dates.

Apprenticeships

The Highways, Engineering and YGC Department supports the Council's Apprenticeship scheme and is proud to confirm that we have 5 Apprentices across the service. These Apprenticeships include: -

- Software Engineering Degree Apprentice – PP/YGC Business Unit
- Civil Engineering Apprentice – Highways Service
- Civil Engineering Apprentice – YGC Service
- Lighting Electrician Apprentice - Lighting Service
- Fleet Technician (Mechanic) Apprentice - Fleet Service

Requests for services via the Cyngor Gwynedd website

Requests for the department's service via the Cyngor Gwynedd website's self-service system, such as reporting a pothole in the road or a faulty street light, are received and processed through the Council's FFOS system. This system is managed and administered by Cyngor Gwynedd's IT department.

Requests for service by telephone

The majority of requests for service from the department that are received by telephone through Galw Gwynedd or directly to the department, they are registered and processed through the Council's FFOS system.

The Community**Golff Giamocs (Crazy Golf) Porthmadog**

The Grounds Maintenance team responsible for the Golff Giamocs (Crazy Golf) Porthmadog site has been collaborating with the PP/YGC Business Development team to improve the look of the site and raise the profile of the facilities. As part of the work, new colourful bilingual signs and flags have been placed around the site, and the course has now been extended to 18 holes. Also, the team has created a specific website and an information leaflet which gives details about the site. The feedback received so far has been very positive about the improvements and we are proud to say that the service has seen an increase in use of the site.

6. Beth yw sgiliau iaith eich staff?

96.6% of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department staff reach the language designations of their post.

All services across the department work with staff to encourage the use of the language and to build confidence.

7. Rhowch enghreifftiau o unrhyw rwystrau, cwynion a chanmoliaeth sy'n gysylltiedig gyda darparu a hyrwyddo gwasanaethau cyfrwng Cymraeg.**Barriers**

Since the Department operates in an engineering industry which is English orientated, it can be difficult to achieve a full service in Welsh. This is primarily due to the need to communicate orally with agencies such as the Welsh Government, North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Agent, Natural Resources Wales etc.

Also, most of the standard forms for engineering contracts are written in English. The same applies to most of the engineering specifications and national codes of practice we use.

In addition, due to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (which replaces the Official Journal of the European Union - OJEU), we can only advertise high-value contracts in English (large schemes or services over a certain price threshold).

The Department prides itself on being able to offer a service that is almost entirely Welsh to our residents. However, it can be difficult at times to recruit staff who fully meet the job language designation in certain roles. This is true even for posts with elementary linguistic levels.

Praise and Complaints

It was clear from the feedback we received at this year's Anglesey Show and career events that there is great appreciation, not only for the service that is delivered to our residents, but also for the use and promotion of Welsh in everything we do. This was encouraging and confirmed that we were on the right path in our approach to the language.

In terms of complaints, the Department has received little criticism for our use of the language. However, we have been criticised on a few occasions for allowing external contractors working on behalf of the Road Maintenance Service to use English-only warning signs on sites. However, these criticisms are rare and are resolved immediately once we are made aware of them.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2023:

[Highways Engineering and YGC Department Welsh Language Promotion Plan.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)

Agenda Item 8

MEETING	Language Committee
DATE	22 October 2024
TITLE	Engagement Sessions to discuss Gwynedd's Education Language Policy
PURPOSE	Elect 5 representatives from the Language Committee to attend the Engagement Session.
AUTHOR	Rhys Glyn – Head of Gwynedd's Immersion Education System

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Over the coming weeks and months, Cyngor Gwynedd representatives will hold a series of engagement sessions to discuss the Council's current Education Language Policy. These sessions will be an opportunity to discuss and gather ideas and suggestions about the policy, and to consider whether it needs to be revised considering the results of the 2021 Census and a number of policy developments in language and education at a national level.
- 1.2 Each representative will receive a copy of Cyngor Gwynedd's current Education Language Policy, along with a short document via email to set the context for the discussion.
- 1.3 In order to ensure fair representation, we aim to have 5 Members of the Language Committee and 5 Members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee to attend the engagement meeting on Gwynedd's Education Language Policy. **The meeting will be held on Wednesday, 4 December between 1:30 and 3:30pm.** Members can join remotely or at the venue at the Headquarters.
- 1.4 The Language Committee is requested to elect 5 Members among them to attend on the above date and time. You should seek to ensure that there is representation from all political groups.