



# Complete Agenda

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

Meeting

**LANGUAGE COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.00 am, TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2025**

Location

**Virtual Meeting**

\*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  
Elfed Williams

Menna Baines  
Alan Jones Evans  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Meryl Roberts  
Beca Brown

#### **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 Llio Elenid Owen, 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 22 October 2024, be signed as a true record (attached)

## **5. REPORT OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2033**

11 - 20

To consider the report.

## **6. REPORT OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2033**

21 - 32

To consider the report.

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## LANGUAGE COMMITTEE: 22 OCTOBER 2024

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### PRESENT:

**Councillors:** Meryl Roberts (Vice-chair)

Alan Jones Evans, Jina Gwyrfai, Olaf Cai Larsen, Elfed Williams, Rhys Tudur, Anne Lloyd Jones, Hefin Underwood and Peter Thomas.

**Officers:** Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser), Llio Mai Dafydd (Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer), Nia Lewis (Language Adviser), Anthony Caradog Evans (Assistant Language Officer) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

- Item 5: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department) and Carwyn Meredydd (Senior Operational Officer).
- Item 6: Ffion Madog Evans (Assistant Head of Finance Department – Accountancy and Pensions) and Huw Ynyr (Assistant Head of Information Technology)
- Item 7: Steffan Jones (Head of Highways, Engineering and YGC Department) and Siôn Arwel Jones (Business Development Manager).
- Item 8: Rhys Meredydd Glyn (Head of Gwynedd Immersion Education System).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Menna Baines (Chair), Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Llio Elenid Owen and Menna Trenholme (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services), Dafydd Williams (Head of the Environment Department) and Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance Department).

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor Rhys Tudur, as he was a member of the Gwynedd Planning Policy Working Group. It was noted that it was not a prejudicial interest, and he did not withdraw from the meeting for the item.

### 3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

### 4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 25 June 2024 as a true record.

### 5. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN – ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

The report was presented by the Assistant Head of Environment Department who referred briefly to the following main points:

It was noted that the front-line nature of the Department led to daily contact with the public and Councillors, therefore every effort was being made to promote the language from day to day, through the work and actions of the staff.

He confirmed that the Department's policies promoted and supported the Welsh language, since consideration of the Welsh language had been central to the development of the Joint Local Development Plan. He added that there was a dedicated Planning Policy in place for dealing with language matters and noted that the Supplementary Planning Guidance provided further detailed guidance on how the Welsh language should be taken into account through all types of developments. He highlighted that the process of developing a new Local Development Plan was currently underway as one of the priorities of the Council Plan. He emphasised that the Welsh language was central to the development of this Plan.

The Members were reminded that the Council had introduced an Article 4 Direction across the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area (noting that this did not include areas that are within the Eryri National Park boundaries). It was reported that planning permission was required to change a property from a main residency into a second home or short-term holiday let since the Article 4 Direction had come into force on 1 September 2024. He explained that the objective was to have better control of the housing stock within the County, to meet the housing needs of Gwynedd's residents. He elaborated that the Direction was a means of assisting the aim of supporting and promoting the Welsh language.

He reported that there had been significant progress in terms of the Department's language skills statistics during the past year, through the self-assessment questionnaire. It was noted that a high number of staff were front-line workers, such as the Waste and Recycling services, where they do not have easy access to the staff intranet site. Consequently, the self-assessment questionnaires were completed with team leaders to gain an understanding of the workforce's language needs. It was highlighted that 81.4% of the Department's staff had completed the questionnaire, and that 83.6% of those employees reached the language designations for their posts. It was acknowledged that the Department needed to continue developing this field, but the officers were confident that they would see progress in future as the work continued.

The efforts of the staff to learn the language and improve their language skills were praised.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

A member drew attention to a statistic within the report that noted that three planning applications had been refused partly due to various language issues, and that 13 planning applications had been granted permission with a planning condition for language alleviation measures. More information was requested regarding on what language reasons could planning permission be refused, and what language alleviation measures could the Department impose on successful applications. In response, the Assistant Head of Department confirmed that he was not able to share specific details about cases. However, it was considered that planning applications would be refused because of lack of evidence about the development's impact on the Welsh language. He elaborated that the department could impose language alleviation conditions that related to the use of Welsh names and signs. He emphasised that a condition had been imposed on 35 successful planning applications to ensure a Welsh name on businesses and on over 120 new dwellings.

The Members were reminded that the Council does not assist any planning application with language statements or any other assessments for planning purposes, as the Council must be impartial. It was acknowledged that language statements were developed by individuals who tended to support the planning applications. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that every application was assessed and challenged based on the evidence submitted. Reference was made to the need for clearer and definitive guidance from the Welsh Government in order to change this situation in future.

It was questioned that the Department was implementing to assess the effect that the Article 4 Direction would have on the housing stock in Gwynedd. In response to the enquiry, the Assistant Head of Department confirmed that there was a monitoring framework in place and that the Planning Service received regular reports from the Taxation service to identify changes in the market as time went by. He elaborated that they would be able to confirm whether more houses are paying the basic council tax rate and whether or not house use was changing as this process continued in the future.

A member enquired whether the Assistant Head was aware of any discussions by other Planning Authorities to introduce an Article 4 Direction in future? In response, the Assistant Head confirmed that Eryri National Park had decided to look into introducing an Article 4 Direction. It was reported that the evidence and information gathered by Cyngor Gwynedd was of huge help to them as they prepared to introduce the Direction and that the two Authorities worked closely together. He noted that they had carried out a formal consultation and that a final decision would be made by the Authority soon.

It was considered that the front-line staff of the Department's services, such as Waste and Recycling, did not reflect the language of the communities they served in some areas of the County. It was noted that recruitment challenges were considered a contributing factor to this problem. In response, the Assistant Head agreed that recruitment was difficult for the Department in general. He emphasised that the Department was making efforts to address this situation and it was hoped that the receipt of information from language skills self-assessment questionnaires would enable the Department to address this situation in future. The Senior Operational Officer added that a lack of confidence amongst staff members to use language skills had also contributed to this challenge. It was reported that work was ongoing to encourage all employees to make use of the Welsh language skills they already possessed.

It was asked if the Department used agencies to advertise job applications, or were these applications made internally within the Council? In response, the Assistant Head confirmed that job advertisements were made bilingually and internally within the Council. It was elaborated that the Senior Operational Officer had been developing recruitment packs so that Council benefits could be more attractive to companies.

A member enquired about an update on the development of the Tir a Môr pack since the Department's presentation to the Language Committee in 2023. In response, the Assistant Head noted that considerable progress had been made on this scheme as the Department had received feedback that it was a very valuable pack. It was added that the use of the pack was being widened, as Anglesey County Council had expressed an interest in using it. Assurance was given that data on this pack would be presented to the Language Committee during the Department's update in 2025.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

## **RESOLVED**

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

## 6. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN – FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The report was presented by the Assistant Head of Finance (Accountancy and Pensions) and the Assistant Head of Information Technology. They referred briefly to the following main points:

The members were reminded of the Digital Plan which the Cabinet had adopted in November 2023. They noted that the Welsh language was a central element of the Plan, and recognised the need to have a Welsh-medium provision for any public facing software. They elaborated that every effort was being made to also ensure a Welsh-language provision in every other aspect of the Council's work. They referred to the Digital Suitability Assessment that was used for any product being developed or purchased by the Council, ensuring that the Welsh language was an important element of those requirements.

It was detailed that the Department had sourced a Welsh-language software package for the new Council Tax self-service site, noting that there was no Welsh-language provision available in the standard package. They explained that this enabled the Council to provide the site bilingually to the public when it became operational.

It was emphasised that a large number of the department's staff reached the language designations for their posts. They added that two members of staff were receiving additional Welsh language training, including a course in Nant Gwrtheyrn recently. It was ensured that every member of staff had some level of Welsh skills within the Department, therefore it was emphasised that all internal correspondence within the Department was shared in Welsh only.

It was confirmed that the Department was currently working with Audit Wales. It was elaborated that the Department had produced six packs of 2023/24 final accounts for Cyngor Gwynedd, Ambition North Wales, GwE and Gwynedd Harbours. It was explained that Audit Wales carried out detailed external audits on all the accounts. They expressed how pleased they were that Audit Wales had appointed more Welsh-speaking auditors following a recent recruitment drive, which meant that meetings were held through the medium of Welsh.

There was pride that the Department had managed to attract trainees for the fields of Finance and Information Technology, and that they were developing their careers through the medium of Welsh.

It was explained that the Pensions Unit had been working with an external company to develop Welsh-medium annual personal video statements. They elaborated that this meant that a virtual person within the video guided individuals through the annual statement of their pension, in Welsh. It was recognised that this had been challenging work for the unit.

It was noted that a new bilingual self-service system for the pension fund had been launched in April this year. Pride was expressed in the fact that the Gwynedd Pension Fund had been the first fund in Wales to upgrade the new site with the support of an external company. It was confirmed that this work was spreading throughout Wales, since the Powys Pension Fund now used it, and there were further plans for other pension funds across Wales to upgrade and use it.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

The report explained that every laptop provided by the Council was provided with the operational platform set in Welsh. It was asked whether the Department had obtained further statistics to check the number that chose to continue with the Welsh setting. In response, the Assistant Head of Information Technology confirmed that 63% of the devices were still in Welsh, and 37% had been switched back to English settings. It was ensured that all Heads of Department encouraged staff to use the Welsh-language interface on their devices, but it was acknowledged that this could not be made compulsory.

The Department was congratulated on the fact that 99.5% of the Department's staff (218 members of staff) had completed a language self-assessment. It was asked if officers had any good practice that could be shared with other Council departments, so that more members of staff completed it. In response to the observations, the Assistant Head of Finance Department (Accountancy and Pensions) confirmed that there were arrangements in place to remind the Management Team to remind the staff regularly, rather than attempting to hold a campaign to get every member of staff to complete it at the same time. It was acknowledged that it was easier for the officers to contact all members of staff because a greater number of them had technological equipment, compared with some other Council departments that dealt with front-line work, where employees did not have laptops.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **7. WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION PLAN – HIGHWAYS, ENGINEERING AND YGC DEPARTMENT**

The report was presented by the Head of Highways, Engineering and YGC and the Business Development Manager. They referred briefly to the following main points:

It was reported that the Department's work was front-line in nature and that employees had frequent contact with the public. It was stressed that most staff were expected to be able to speak Welsh to an acceptable level so that queries could be dealt with directly and provide a better customer experience as a result.

They provided a list of different training that had been provided to support staff to develop and foster their skills. They were also pleased that the Department had managed to attract apprentices to the fields of civil engineering, electrician and fleet technician. It was emphasised that the Welsh language was focal to their development within the Department.

They expressed pride that 96.6% of the Department's staff reached the language designations for their posts. It was noted that this was a significant increase since the Department had previously reported to the Language Committee and that the Department had worked consistently to ensure that employees had the opportunity to complete the self-evaluation questionnaire. It was elaborated that work continued within all services across the Department to encourage language use and build confidence in language skills.

It was noted that three engineers from the YGC service were members of the Institution of Civil Engineers North Wales's Graduate Student Technician board. It was elaborated that one of the members chaired the group, reporting on technical issues to other groups across the United Kingdom regularly.



It was confirmed that joint working took place with the Environment Category Team and the Council's Business Support Team for attending events across the County. It was explained that the aim of the events was to raise awareness of opportunities for local subcontractors to register on the Council's list of Subcontractors or to provide a service through the Council's frameworks. They elaborated that information was shared as part of the Council's Business Support Bulletin which was issued on a weekly basis. It was hoped to hold further events with Adra, the Council's Departments and more businesses in the future.

They reported that the department had received positive feedback during this year's Anglesey Show and also in careers events. It was noted that these included comments about the service being delivered to residents as well as the department's work to promote the Welsh language.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

It was noted that the Department had received several complaints about issues such as English-only signs. It was asked what steps the Department was taking to reduce the number of complaints in the future. In response, it was acknowledged that this had been a challenge over the past year because the Department had been working with specialist external contractors. It was emphasised that contracts, by now, emphasised the need to introduce all signage for sites bilingually and that sanctions can be introduced if the conditions of the policies are breached. They confirmed that no difficulties had arisen since this change was introduced and that the Department was keen to build on these procedures in the future, as it was inevitable that use of external contractors would continue due to the specialised nature of aspects of the Department's work.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

## **RESOLVED**

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

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

The report was presented by the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System who referred briefly to the following main points:

He explained that the Education department was currently holding a series of sessions to discuss the current Education Language Police. He noted that the sessions were an opportunity to discuss ideas and suggestions relating to the policy. He elaborated that it was also an opportunity to consider whether the current Education Language Policy needs revising following the results of the 2021 Census as well as several policy developments in the field of language and education nationally.

It was confirmed that the Department had commissioned Meirion Prys Jones (freelance language consultant) to act as facilitator during all the sessions.

It was reported that some of the sessions had already been held across Gwynedd, in order to receive input from the headteachers of primary, secondary and special schools.

It was noted that the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee had already elected five members to attend the engagement meeting, namely Councillors Elwyn Jones, Jina Gwyrfai, Beth Lawton, Rhys Tudur and Richard Glyn Roberts.

The Language Committee was asked to elect an additional 5 representatives to join in the engagement meeting to be held on 4 December 2024.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

It was confirmed that Councillors Menna Baines and Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn had indicated their desire to attend the engagement meeting, when submitting their apologies for this meeting of the Language Committee.

Councillors Cai Larsen, Alan Jones Evans and Meryl Roberts expressed an interest in attending the engagement meeting.

## **RESOLVED**

**To elect Councillors Menna Baines, Meryl Roberts, Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, Alan Jones Evans and Olaf Cai Larsen to attend an engagement session to discuss the Council's current Education Language Policy on the afternoon of 4 December 2024.**

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.15am.

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**CHAIR**

<b>Date</b>	20th December 2024
<b>Department</b>	Education
<b>Author</b>	Rhys Meredydd Glyn

**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)**

e.g.

Name

**Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** (*Early years and learning*):

*This area is specifically addressed in the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and specific measures have been formulated to monitor progress.*

Brief summary

*It is ensured that every Early Years setting sets a strong foundation for Welsh, ensuring that every child is given a Language, Literacy and Communication skills assessment in Welsh on entry and at the end of part-time nursery education, and at the end of the Foundation Phase.*

Relevant strategic policies and plans:

**Gwynedd County Council's Welsh In Education Strategic Plan:**

Gwynedd WESP reflects the Council's vision to create a Welsh and bilingual education system that puts the needs of all learners in the county at the centre. The plan sets a clear commitment and direction for ensuring that Gwynedd learners achieve the highest standards to maintain the language, culture and economy locally.

**Gwynedd Education Language Policy:**

Gwynedd's Education Language Policy aims to ensure that all pupils in the county have appropriate language skills in both Welsh and English. The provision is expected to be suitable to enable all pupils to develop bilingual proficiency. In this context schools are expected to continue to build the skills of those pupils who are Welsh speakers, and to introduce Welsh to those who are newcomers to the county.

All education institutions in the county are also expected to reflect and reinforce the policy in their administration, social life and pastoral procedures as well as their curricular and extra-curricular provision.

**Cymraeg 2050 National Strategy - A Million Welsh Speakers:**

As the title of the strategy suggests, the Welsh Government wants to see the number of Welsh speakers rise to one million by the year 2050.

**National Language Charter Framework:**

The Language Charter programme contributes to Cymraeg 2050 by aiming to inspire children and young people to use and enjoy the Welsh language in all aspects of their lives. The Language Charter is part of a series of Welsh Government programmes which aim to increase children and young people's use of Welsh in informal situations.

**Curriculum for Wales:**

The Language Charter programme supports the Curriculum for Wales with the principles of the programme supporting the four purposes in order to create ambitious learners, enterprising contributors, principled citizens and healthy and confident individuals who

are prepared to live a fulfilled life as valued members of their society. The Charter is an integrated part of the Curriculum for Wales, bridging between elements of the curriculum and adding to educational experiences as well as enriching extra-curricular experiences and informal playtime.

#### **Welsh Language and Education Bill:**

It is the Welsh Government's intention to put on the Statute Book legislation relating to the further development of aspects of Welsh-medium Education. It is set out in the White Paper published by the Government that the Bill will take steps to enable all pupils in Wales to become confident Welsh speakers through the statutory education system. The Welsh Government will expect to see an increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education over these next few years and there will be a statutory imperative for local authorities to plan for this growth.

#### **Well-being of Future Generations Act:**

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions. Seven Well-being Goals are included in the act; the purpose of which is to ensure that everyone is working towards achieving the same goals. One of those goals is to work towards a Wales with a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives.

#### [Projects in the Council's plan](#)

**Gwynedd Yfory:** *How does the new Youth provision work across the county and what outcomes does it achieve for young people?*

#### **Joint project with the Urdd**

A joint project between Gwynedd Youth Service and the Urdd is aimed at increasing opportunities for young people to take part in activities through the medium of Welsh. This collaboration involves the employment of a joint Youth Officer, who organises activities through the medium of Welsh during and after school hours. This aims to encourage young people to use Welsh in social and informal situations, helping to strengthen the use of the language outside the classroom. In addition, Gwynedd Youth Service offers a range of opportunities for 11-25 year olds to develop language, personal, social and educational skills in places where the use of Welsh is not as widespread. The service focuses on health and wellbeing, skills development and community inclusion, with the aim of helping young people become confident and self-sufficient adults.

- five Community Aelwydydd have been developed in Felinheli, Bangor, Caernarfon, Ardudwy and Bala

- Various sessions are run outside of the school timetable at six of the county's secondary schools.

#### **Welsh Bands Gigs**

Have collaborated with the voice of young people forums and Hunaniaith to arrange gigs featuring Welsh bands. These events have offered a platform for young bands to introduce their music to broader audiences, fostering a lively music culture for local young people and having the opportunity to enjoy the biggest Welsh bands singing in their home area.

3420 Welsh-medium sessions organised by the Youth Service. A wide range of activities including community youth clubs, outings, occasional trips, workshops in schools, small group work, one-to-one work and commissioned provision for partners.

- What kind of data has been collected about the activities?
  - 19625 participations

- 1018 accreditations completed
  - 98% report enjoying the sessions
  - 97% report feeling their well-being has improved
  - 97% have learned a new skill/experience
  - 97% want to continue attending
- Reporting on Youth Service outcomes
    - monthly to Cyngor Gwynedd on the data outlined above
    - annually to the council's scrutiny committees
    - to the Welsh Government every six months, by providing an update on the service
    - Receives £20,000 annually from the Welsh Government to tackle increasing the Welsh-language provision for young people
- Language and location of activities
    - All activities we offer in Welsh/bilingual
    - Youth Worker based at every single high school and special school and working through transitioning into the community
    - Community projects taking place across Gwynedd
- Number of young people who attended (or estimated where statistics are not available)
    - 19625 year-round participations

### **Gwynedd Gymraeg (A Welsh-speaking Gwynedd):**

#### ***Modernise and extend the immersion provision for teaching Welsh to children***

The work of constructing and monitoring Phase 1, at the value of 1.1 million, i.e. the Primary/Secondary Transition immersion units, has been completed and the Tywyn Immersion Unit, the final one to be completed, will open its doors to the learners on 20 January 2025. This provision ensures that learners who are newcomers to the county have opportunities to learn Welsh as quickly as possible within their region, through up-to-date, state-of-the-art provision. In addition, construction and modernisation of the primary immersion units at the value of 1.1 million is also underway on time and the new unit at Ysgol Cymerau, Dolgellau and Maesincla will open to learners at the start of the summer term 2025. This provision will ensure the best opportunity for all our learners to become confident Welsh speakers who can use the language in all walks of life.

#### **[Other projects and schemes](#)**

#### ***Engagement Meetings to discuss Gwynedd's Education Language Policy:***

During the winter term 2024, Cyngor Gwynedd representatives held a series of engagement sessions to discuss Cyngor Gwynedd's current Education Language Policy. Meirion Prys Jones, a freelance language consultant, was commissioned to facilitate the meetings. Meirion is known for his work in language planning and has advised Education Authorities nationally and internationally and has also worked closely with the Welsh Government. These sessions were an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss, and to gather ideas and suggestions about the policy and to consider whether it needs to be revised in light of the results of the 2021 Census and a number of policy developments in language and education at the national level. 20 meetings were held with a

cross-section of engagers; primary and secondary children, Special Schools pupils, Headteachers from across sectors and regions, Elected Members from the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee along with Representation from the Gwynedd Governors' Forum and Language Commissioner officers. Early in the new year a draft policy and strategy will be drawn up to be presented to members of the Scrutiny Committee.

### **Evaluating the Immersion Education System**

The Immersion Regime has now completed a cycle of one year and two terms since its inception in January 2023. It was therefore timely to evaluate the change and also consider the views of stakeholders by carrying out an Impact Study. Bangor University was commissioned to carry out the evaluation.

The aim of this comprehensive case study was to evaluate the impact and scrutinise the provision of the current Immersion Education System to see if it delivers on the promise and provides pupils in Gwynedd with the necessary foundation to acquire Welsh when embarking on their linguistic journey to becoming new speakers.

Stakeholder engagement meetings were held, e.g. headteachers and mainstream teachers; teachers of the immersion units, parents and learners. Time was also spent observing the learners in the immersion units and back in the schools on the transition days at the beginning and end of the immersion course.

The final report of the Evaluation will be submitted to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee during the spring term 2025. The final report will provide robust research evidence on the efficiency of the immersion model in Gwynedd, along with recommendations for potential developments and improvements in Gwynedd and beyond for the future.

### **Education Strategy**

The purpose of the strategy is to set out an ambition for education in Gwynedd over the next decade. A child only has one chance to receive an education and it is absolutely key that the education system in Gwynedd enables our children to be whatever they want to be. Our education system should not restrain our children's ambition. The strategy will incorporate the priorities of the Council's Plan and in the context of the Welsh language ensuring that all children in Gwynedd have access to Welsh confidently in school and socially, and by supporting efforts to create new speakers of all ages.

## **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?**

*(e.g. education, resources, families, promoting service use through Welsh)*

- Implementing Recommendations following the engagement process regarding the Language Policy.
- Implementing the Recommendations of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System Evaluation Final Report.

## **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?**

Our virtual ICT project Aberwla is evolving rapidly and is now a village full of locations offering learners varied activities as they practise and reinforce vocabulary and Welsh-language patterns. There is a farm including a Glamping Field, supermarket, garage, gadgets shop, Café, Leisure

Centre and Library and we are currently developing a Forest and Weather Station. This innovative resource is used in our immersion centres and children love to use it and learn through play. We are also trialling it in the immersion unit at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd Wrexham, Glan Clwyd immersion unit, secondary immersion units in Anglesey, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Carmarthenshire, Vale of Glamorgan and Ceredigion.

This is a high quality, appealing provision of contemporary immersive education for learners to develop and practise their Welsh-language speaking, listening and reading skills. It offers newcomers the opportunity to increase their use of Welsh, posing a challenge to extend the more able and talented learners and is a resource that bridges primary and secondary learners. This resource undoubtedly fosters healthy attitudes towards Welsh as an everyday and everything language. It normalises the Welsh language on an exciting Digital platform.

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

##### **e.g. Early years**

1. *The reach data of WESP in terms of the number of childcare placements and the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education.*
2. *Number of Ti a Fi groups and Parent and Child groups that are supported/maintained.*
3. *Number of activities specifically targeted towards young families/parents and infants by Council services.*
4. *Number of family activities arranged by the language initiative.*
5. *Number of campaigns to share resources and information.*

##### **Learning**

1. WESP monitoring statistics
2. Number of Council staff receiving training to improve skills
3. Number of apprenticeships being offered by the Council
4. Number of training/accreditation opportunities being offered by the youth service

##### **Work and service**

1. Number of businesses receiving financial support through Arfor scheme
2. Number of staff supported to learn Welsh or develop skills
3. Number of staff participating in buddy/champion schemes

##### **The community**

1. Number of activities held by Council services and the language enterprise for different groups
2. Number of enterprises supported by means of Regeneration and Economy schemes

##### **Research and technology**

1. Number of research projects undertaken by the Council, or commissioned by the Council

##### **Any other relevant data**

In the area of Early Years there is a specific target within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27 for 'Ensuring Welsh/Bilingual Language provision for all children in the County'.

The 2024 Progress Report states that, in line with the information DEWIS retains in relation to the language of our provision, 47.49% of our provision is monolingual with 47.10% providing bilingually and 3.86% providing in English with bilingual elements.

(The information below counts all the service that provisions have indicated on Dewis - one provision may be offering more than one service, e.g. nursery group and after-school club).

Below is our current situation regarding the percentage of nursery/three-year-olds educated through the medium of Welsh.

Gwynedd Nursery Groups Data

Area	Number of Cylchoedd Meithrin	Number/ % of nursery three-year-old children transferring to Welsh-medium education
Arfon	28	99%
Dwyfor	18	100%
Meirionnydd	19	100%

Summer Term 2024 – 388 three-year-olds receive their Nursery Education claim in 51 Welsh-medium locations within the County.

The 16 Flying Start childcare settings within the County are all Welsh-medium.

Linguistic designation data of the other childcare provisions in the County:-

Provision	Welsh	Bilingual	English
Nurseries	13	5	1
Cylchoedd Meithrin / Playgroups - that do not provide NE	7	1	
Childminders	37	5	10
After-school/Holiday Clubs	10	2	

98.21% of the county's five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh and effective practical support is in place to increase provision in one particular primary school to realise the 100% target within the lifetime of the WESP. We are using a portion of a late immersion grant to employ an experienced teacher to collaborate with Reception and Year 1 class staff and learners at a particular Bangor school to model successful immersion methods and collaborate with Foundation Phase staff to map learners' Welsh-language development along the language continuum. The teacher is also supporting at two other Bangor schools to embed early immersion methods in Reception. At the transitional school 25 learners from Reception and 13 from year 1 have had access to early immersion intervention.

According to PLASC 2024 data there are 67 Black, Asian and minority ethnic five-year-old learners enrolled in Gwynedd Schools. 58 of them are taught through the medium of Welsh at 87%. The rest of this cohort of nine attend the primary school which is in the transitional category and receive a proportion of their education through the medium of Welsh under the auspices of a



Welsh Government Latecomers Immersion grant. This is the second year since the process of increasing Welsh-language provision at the school began. There were 1290 learners in the year 6 cohort across Gwynedd schools transferring to secondary in September 2023. The table below sets out teachers' assessments of language cohorts that summarise learners' levels and language skills across the speaking, reading and writing thread.

A	pupils proficient in both languages	825	64%
B	pupils stronger in Welsh than English	113	8.8%
C1	pupils stronger in English than Welsh	275	21.3%
C2	pupils with limited Welsh - learners/latecomers	55	4.2%
CH	pupils limited in their use of both languages	22	1.7%

Milestones were set in the previous WESP report to increase the number of learners in cohort A and B. This priority was realised this year and it can be seen from the above table that 74.8% had been assessed as bilingually proficient. This is an increase of 7.8% since 2022-2023 when both cohorts were 67%.

41% of the Bangor Cluster children fall into cohort A which is an increase of 2% and 41% in cohort C1 which is a reduction of 6%. Refresher and confidence boosting projects have taken place within the cluster, targeting year 5 and 6 learners, to raise standards and confidence of learners in Welsh. Additional support is provided between September 2024 and March 2025 for schools in the Bangor and Tywyn catchment area to focus their Welsh provision in the context of categorisation in order to strengthen this provision and equip the workforce to use immersion methods successfully with the learners who arrive at the schools with their parents as they migrate here to work for the university, at the hospital and at care and nursing homes.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, 195 learners from years 2-9 were provided with support and access on an intensive 10-week immersion course in the immersion units across the three regions within the county which averages 65 pupils each term. In addition, 101 learners were provided with aftercare support during the academic year in 44 mainstream schools. 42 year 7, 8 and 9 learners attended a short course to regain confidence over three weeks in the secondary schools that host the Primary/Secondary Transition immersion units. This is the first time we as a system have offered this course. As the feedback is positive, we will re-run the course in September 2025. We prioritise access to the Regaining Confidence course for learners who have been assessed as cohort C1 by primary school teachers.

We work closely with the Hunaniaith Language Initiative to hold specific meetings in target areas, e.g. Pen Llŷn, to raise awareness of the Welsh language and include the parents of latecomers in community activities as well as immerse them in the Welsh-language culture in the area. An evening of fun was organised at the community hall in Botwnnog, and Anni Llŷn was commissioned to run language awareness workshops with the learners at the school which was then shared amongst the parents. Pupils at the school were invited to perform. This was a very inclusive community event. The proposal is to use this collaboration model in similar communities in the future. Collaboration is also taking place with Menter Iaith Bangor, amongst communities

from ethnic backgrounds to be included in Welsh and Welsh-language community activities to raise awareness of the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

There were 1303 learners in the Year 11 cohort in Gwynedd secondary schools in the summer 2024. Detailed Welsh-language provision data is collected individually from each of the secondary schools in the county.

Here is the current data against the three indicators of Welsh qualifications at the end of the statutory age of 16 years old – which includes all pupils in the county:

<b>WESP OUTCOME 4 INDICATOR</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Percentage of year 11 pupils who study at least three KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as GCSE Welsh First Language	73.6%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who study at least five KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as GCSE Welsh First Language	73.2%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who sit the GCSE Welsh First Language exam	84.2%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who sit the GCSE Welsh Second Language exam	14.35%
Did not register for GCSE Welsh	1.5%

79 Gwynedd schools are part of the Language Charter and one school is doing Cymraeg Campus and working towards the bronze award this year. Many national discussions have taken place and new resources and documents have been published for the charter's re-launch in September. 13 Gwynedd schools led by Gwynedd's Language Charter Coordinator and Secondary Language Strategy Officer will be validated for Bronze, Silver or Gold awards during the 2024-2025 academic year.

All ALN/SEN pupils will receive input through the medium of Welsh within the Authority.

All staff providing from the ALN&I Central Service are fluent in Welsh and able to provide a bilingual service.

## **5. What are the language skills of your staff?**

The starting point for our Welsh-language education workforce is good with 97.6% of primary teachers and 86% of secondary teachers being confident to teach through the medium of Welsh.

We are regularly sharing information with our schools about the provision available for improving the Welsh-language skills of the workforce. Our two transitional secondary schools are aware of the support available to them through the Welsh Learning Event of the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

The Ysgol Friars Welsh-language Promotion Teacher holds activities to increase confidence in Welsh with groups of staff at the school.

As reported in Outcome 6, a specialist Welsh-medium workforce is available in the county to respond fully through the Welsh language whilst supporting learners with Additional Learning Needs and their families. The authority and the county's secondary schools have been an integral

part of developing Welsh-medium training in collaboration with CYDAG and the WJEC on the new qualifications. The county's schools are also part of a new CYDAG North Wales forum promoting Welsh-language education across north Wales.

Discussions have commenced with Meirion Ebbw Vale and the National Centre for Learning Welsh as to the support that could be offered specifically and expertly to Gwynedd. The transitional schools have already engaged with their existing provision.

In the context of the Education Department's Language Designations, 95.4% of Department staff who have completed a language self-assessment meet their job's language designations. However a large number of school Catering and Cleaning staff have not completed the self-assessment due to a lack of easy access to the questionnaire on the Council's Self-Service system.

Education Department Staff Data:

Number having completed the language questionnaire: 1468 (44.43%)

Number who have not completed the language questionnaire: 1836 (55.57%)

Number who have received a language assessment (having completed the questionnaire or had a simple assessment from a line manager): 1496 (45.28%)

Number who have not received a language assessment: 1808 (54.72%)

Data for staff who meet the language designations of their jobs (for those with a language assessment only):

1361 (91%)-Reaching the language designations of their job

135 (9%)Not reaching the language designations of their job.

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

There are current recruitment challenges for staff in the childcare field, and there is a need to monitor the workforce's Welsh-language skills over the next period to avoid any slippage in standards.

There are challenges to appoint Language Coordinators in some catchment areas - existing coordinators are stepping down from the role in two areas, and successors need to be appointed.

Staffing levels within the Educational Psychology Service are concerning in terms of being able to offer this provision through the medium of Welsh to the necessary level.

The challenging situation in recruiting teacher-leaders and teachers, particularly in some areas of expertise, is an ongoing challenge.

Similarly the challenge of recruiting and retaining assistants across our schools remains evident.

Finance is a huge challenge for schools. Cuts inevitably mean a reduction in staff and inevitably this has an impact on the Welsh language.

Lack of easy access for Catering and Cleaning staff to the Council's Self-Service System - a complete lack of data means we do not have full knowledge of the proficiency or language needs of this particular workforce within the Department.

On a positive note, the Cook in one primary school in Arfon has been accepted on a Welsh course at Nant Gwrtheyrn through the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Catering Department has agreed to pay her salary whilst she attends the course.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024:  
[Education Department Welsh Language Promotion Plan.pdf](#)

<b>Title</b>	Report of the Corporate Services Department on the implementation of the Language Policy and contribution towards the realisation of the Welsh Language Strategy 2023 – 2033
<b>Date</b>	28 January 2025
<b>Department</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Author</b>	Ian Jones, Head of Department

**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)**

The Corporate Services Department has specific policies, strategic plans, projects and work streams that contribute to the objectives of the language strategy.

Below are examples of how the Department contributes to the objectives of the language strategy:

**Relevant strategic policies and plans:**

**Procurement Policy** - A Sustainable Procurement Policy and Procurement Strategy already exists and includes Language requirements. The policy and strategy will be updated during 2025.

**Cymraeg 2050 – 'A million Welsh-speakers'** – The Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy sets out the Government's long-term approach to achieving the target of one million Welsh-speakers by 2050. There are three main themes, 'increasing the number of Welsh-speakers', 'increasing use of Welsh' and 'creating favourable conditions'. We are constantly working towards trying to promote the use of Welsh in line with the Welsh Government's Strategy.

**The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** – 'A Wales with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language' is one of the main well-being goals of the Act.

**Equality Plan 2024 – 2028 - 2028** - The purpose of the equality plan is to reduce inequality between people who have equality characteristics and people who do not share one of the characteristics. The objectives of the plan touch on all areas of work within the Council, and put in place a framework to improve fairness within the organisation and to ensure that we treat people according to needs. The Welsh language is central to all aspects of the plan.

**Council Plan Projects 2023 - 2028**

- **Keeping the Benefit Local** - The Keeping the Benefit Local project seeks to maximise the local benefit and in turn promote and develop the language. It is possible for us to assess tenders based on this and language measures have been developed. The measures include an assessment of the financial amount and time resource that companies offer when carrying out work. The Unit has also been working with the Language Team to identify companies to target for the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Welsh Language Offer' scheme.
- **A Welsh Gwynedd** - 'A Welsh Gwynedd' is a work stream of the Council's Plan, with the Corporate Services Department leading on projects to 'Promote the use of Welsh by Gwynedd residents'. All projects under the Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023 - 2033 contribute to the work. The work of the Gwynedd Language Strategy is divided into 5 action areas, and we also show how the objectives of our strategy contribute to the 3 main areas of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
- **Research** - The Research and Information Service analyses and shares information about the Welsh language situation in the county, to inform decisions and policies across the Council including the Council Plan.

#### **Ffordd Gwynedd Plan Priorities 2023 - 2028**

- **A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce**
  - A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce is one of the work stream priorities of the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan. A staff Well-being Plan has just been adopted as part of that work stream and the well-being support available to staff is fully bilingual with a great emphasis on the language in the procurement process on matters such as staff Counselling Service etc.
- **Workforce Planning and Talent Development** – Workforce Planning and Talent Development is a Ffordd Gwynedd Plan work stream. The project focuses on attracting and retaining staff in the long term, by ensuring that there is an adequate supply of staff available to meet service needs, and in particular therefore Welsh-speaking staff.
- **The Council's Digital Plan:** The Council's Digital Plan is part of the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan's Digital Transformation priority work stream. Work on information and data is being undertaken by the Research and Information Service and in collaboration with other Departments, to facilitate access to data and information both inside and outside the Council. This includes information about the Welsh language and through the medium of Welsh.

#### **Other projects and schemes by the services of the Corporate Services Department:**

- **Research and Information Service** – The service is in constant discussions with the Office for National Statistics about their plans to (possibly) not conduct future

Censuses but to collect data in other ways, seeking influence to make sure that (at least) Census-like information will continue to be available.

- **Procurement Service** – Complying with existing Language Standards is challenging in itself, requests for support to tender arrive last minute and obtaining a bilingual package is difficult within a tight timescale.
- **Support Service** – The modules for staff within the Staff Self-Service system are developed bilingually. The Support Service is awaiting a response from DBS in Liverpool on when the on-line application form will be developed in Welsh.
- **Customer Contact and Registration Service** – All marriage / civil partnership ceremonies are welcomed bilingually even if the couples are monolingual in English.

The offer is given at the start of all registrations (birth and death) if they wish to register bilingually.

The Customer Contact and Registration Service have pressed on the Welsh Government several years ago to change the way of undertaking a face-to-face assessment for a blue badge, rather than sending out an interpreter the assessor carries out the assessment in Welsh (if this is the customer's choice).

There were changes to the Death Registration Legislation in September 2024, where the coroner has the ability to register deaths – this template is provided by the General Register Office but is currently available in English only. Gwynedd Coroner and Registrars have requested a bilingual sheet to enable bilingual registration.

The Customer Contact and Registration Service is collaborating with the General Registration Office to test the new DRS (Digital Registration System) system which will be introduced during the year.

An automation system has been provided bilingually at Galw Gwynedd – Welsh first / then English to promote the language to customers.

- **Health, Safety and Well-being Service** – Occupational Health Doctor – this is a highly specialised area where the availability of doctors is rare but obtaining a Welsh-speaking qualified doctor in the field has so far proven impossible. Innovative work is taking place to find a successor for the current doctor by collaborating with a local GP and providing her with shadowing experiences while she qualifies in the field. This provides us with a succession plan when our current non-Welsh speaking doctor retires within the year.

Work is taking place jointly with IOSH (the leading professional organisation for Health and Safety nationally) to be accrediting a Managing Safely course in Welsh and Cyngor Gwynedd will be the only organisation in North Wales to offer it in Welsh. This work is taking place in collaboration with Aberystwyth University.

- **Communications and Engagement Service - Social media** – a single account is used where messages are published in both languages. This means that all our followers

see our messages in Welsh as well as English. Each message is published in such a way that the Welsh message is at the top of the stream.

Videos - We produce our social media video clips in Welsh and add English subtitles to normalise the use of the language.

The press and the media - We provide answers all through the medium of Welsh to the Welsh media. As our officers, Leader and Cabinet Members are Welsh-speakers, we provide a large number of contributors for Welsh language media.

Communicating with staff - Cyngor Gwynedd is innovative in how we communicate with staff and it helps normalise the language through technology, e.g. our use of the staff Facebook group / Chief Executive live session. The home page and news section on the intranet and staff magazine are monolingual, with an English copy available on request.

The Council's Website - All on-line content and services on Cyngor Gwynedd's website and app are bilingual and we are taking proactive steps to encourage users to use the website in Welsh.

Public Engagement – All engagement exercises are conducted entirely bilingually and any focus groups, public meetings, drop-in sessions etc. are conducted by bilingual facilitators and officers.

- **Democracy and Language Service** - Language awareness - In addition to the on-line mandatory sessions, efforts have been made to hold face-to-face sessions on language awareness for councillors and staff. A session was held for 16 councillors to talk about plans and projects that contribute to the promotion of the Welsh language, the Council's statutory role and responsibilities in terms of promoting the Welsh language and the role of members to influence within communities. There are also upcoming presentations to managers regarding language policy, face-to-face sessions have been held with the Education and Corporate Services Departments. A session for finance managers will be held over the next few months, and an on-line session will be developed which will be available on the staff intranet.

Gwynedd Language Forum - Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Unit administrates the Gwynedd Language Forum with around 20 organisations acting in the interests of the Welsh language, meeting on a quarterly basis. A young people's sub-group is organising a consultation to gather the response of young people about their attitude and use of Welsh. A questionnaire and focus groups will be shared in January with results shared with the sub-group.

Welsh in business - The Language Unit has discussed regularly during the year with the Economy and Planning Departments, with positive steps made to strengthen the Welsh language within businesses. There is now a standard sentence included in a newsletter for businesses and planning documents referring to the support available in terms of translating and naming businesses.



Partnership boards - The Language Unit representative is a member on several partnership boards, including representing the Council on the Welsh Language Sub-group of the Public Services Board, contributing to a piece of work that examines good practice in recruiting employees with Welsh language skills and the internal More than Words group. They also represent the Welsh language on the World Heritage Site Partnership Board and the benefits sub-group, with the hope of working further over the year to gather the benefits evidence and data.

Place Names Project - Several elements of the project's original programme of work have been achieved, including holding a property naming training session for the Language and Scrutiny Unit and the Environment Department as well as numerous workshops in schools on place names and how to record on Cyngor Gwynedd's place name map. Cyngor Gwynedd's official name list app has been created and collaboration is in place to organise the installation of new signs in certain places and streets to visually promote the Welsh language in society.

Visitors from the Basque Country - A conversation was held in December between two visitors from the Basque Country and officers from the Language Unit and the economy department. A discussion was held on the relationship of the Language Initiative with the council and language policy developments, with the visitors able to see similarities between our work as a Council and their own.

- **Organisational Learning and Development Service –**

Training – The majority of sessions that are ran are through the medium of Welsh (with Welsh language resources available where possible). An option to have an interpreter for those learning (e.g. in the Welcome Workshop).

There is specific reference to the ability to deliver training bilingually in the specification created for the procurement process.

E-learning - Providing training through the medium of Welsh, e.g. Microsoft Excel, Basic Digital Skills, DiSC (other than the report), Digital Skills 1:1. The e-learning modules created in-house are available in Welsh.

Developing Language Skills

Welsh Tip of the Month:

The **Welsh Tip of the Month** continues to be produced and shared with staff (via the Intranet, Language Training Hub, staff Facebook group and Gair Wythnosol e-mail). It is also shared with Nant Gwrtheyrn and with one language tutor.

Cynllun Cyfeillion (Buddy Scheme):

The **Cyfeillion Cymraeg (Welsh Friends)** scheme has existed for some years now, but in the last year the 'Cylch Cyfeillion (Circle of Friends)' has been established, which meets every 6 months for members of staff who volunteer their time to support others who are learning or developing their Welsh skills. It is an opportunity for the

Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer to support them and for everyone to have the opportunity to share any challenges and good practice.

5 members of staff are currently receiving support through the Cyfeillion Cymraeg scheme, with a further 2 waiting for a Buddy.

#### Language Training:

24 members of staff are currently receiving language training, with 7 registered for training which is yet to commence. A consultative conversation was held with 5 other members of staff who have yet to register on a suitable course.

Enquiries were made about interest in a Language Refresher course and a Confidence Building course. 21 members of staff showed interest in a Language Refresher course (as well as one manager showing interest for team-wide training), and 18 in the Confidence Building course. These courses will be organised with Learning Welsh North West through the Work Welsh scheme for 2025.

Opportunities to develop Welsh language skills have been promoted through the intranet, the Language Training Hub, the Gair Wythnosol e-mail and e-mails including forwarding information to members of the Language Designations Forum who forward the information to their department staff. Information about language training is also shared with the North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Agent.

The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer is seeking opportunities and responds to requests to submit information about the support available for staff to develop their language skills, e.g. presenting at the Healthy Living HR Panel meeting.

In November, the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer held an 'Experts Session' with the new apprentices and trainees to make them aware of the status of Welsh here at the Council as well as to ensure they know about the support available to them to develop their language skills.

#### Staff Language Skills:

Information on staff language levels is reported quarterly to all Council Heads of departments in the form of a report. The report includes information about the number of staff who have not completed the language self-assessment, the number who are not reaching their job language designations and information about department staff undertaking language training.

Through the Language Designations Forum (which meets on a quarterly basis) the departments are encouraged to ensure that all staff complete the language self-assessment or receive a simple assessment from their line manager. It is also stressed that all managers are required to ensure staff receive language training if they do not meet their job language designations.

In conjunction with the Language Unit, work is underway to address the standard of written Welsh used across the Council. The work will focus on the challenge of

ensuring language accuracy across all Council documents (particularly those published), the skill of writing in simple and clear Welsh, dispelling some misconceptions about Welsh at Cyngor Gwynedd, and re-examining job descriptions.

Staff Benefits - Information about benefits to staff is all offered bilingually where possible.

There is a negotiation with several companies for them to provide us with Welsh information sheets instead of English-only ones. icom Works/Terryberry; CSSC, Give as you Earn, RAC. In some cases we arrange to send them a translation and another time they arrange to translate things themselves and send it to us before publication.

Our Visits/Roadshows with staff are conducted bilingually as requested and the documents we share with them are also bilingual. Staff were part of Roadshows with Carers last year and were able to promote the language support/training at the sessions.

The Local Business Promotion Scheme is also a way to promote the Welsh language. Businesses have a bilingual advert on our site. When they are Business of the Month their story needs to be in Welsh.

Talent and Apprenticeships - We have a Welsh Language Ambition statement which sets out clearly what our ambition is and outlines the linguistic expectations on the apprentice, the Council and the provider. The practical sessions discuss the Welsh language in our Apprentice Networks every few months.

Language refresher / support sessions for staff at different language levels are offered. We are collaborating with providers such as Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Bangor University and Coleg Cambria on increasing the Welsh language provision. A report (Providers' Language Report 2024) has been produced with the support of officers and the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor which presents the current situation and outlines our plans for the next 3 years to improve the situation.

We are nominated this year for the Employer of the Year award by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol at the North Wales Work-Based Learning Awards 2025.

Work is being undertaken to look at commissioning Confidence Building training in the workplace to be part of an apprentice development programme (through the support of the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer and Dr Elin Angharad Davies, Workplace Tutor-Organiser, Bangor University).

We collaborate with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol – sharing opportunities and inviting them to discuss what materials they have that can benefit apprentices in networks.

Stories, experiences and case studies about individuals who have succeeded are shared on the social networks and in media such as Gair o Gyngor.

A collaboration is taking place with Urdd Gobaith Cymru to promote and share the success of a recent member of staff as he qualifies and is offered a job after pursuing his apprenticeship entirely through the medium of Welsh.

A half-hour podcast was recently recorded for Profi, the Llwyddo'n Lleol Scheme about working for Cyngor Gwynedd and using Welsh in the workplace.

Ensure a presence in Bwrlwm ARFOR - a programme powered by the ARFOR regions to unlock businesses and communities thriving with Welsh in Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Anglesey. An opportunity to let other organisations and businesses in the area know what opportunities are available at the Council to work and celebrate the Welsh language.

Learning and Development Apprentice - Two main projects – Work Tasters and Undeb y Dyfodol – that promote the Welsh language. The 2 projects are innovative as they are through the medium of Welsh, where such projects are not available in other organisations through the medium of Welsh.

- **Human Resources Advisory Service:-** the Service ensures that staff have access to information and advice about all aspects of their employment through the medium of Welsh, and works with trade union officials to ensure that staff can receive support from them through a choice of staff language. This includes arranging that an interpreter is available at formal employment hearings.

All Council recruitment and appointment arrangements are bilingual including the procedure of receiving application forms for vacant posts.

## **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?**

*(e.g. education, resources, families, promoting service use through Welsh)*

Over the next year, ongoing work will take place within the Department to raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh.

Procurement templates will be updated and translated in the new year. The intranet and the buy wise link are also updated and an opportunity to review the content. A change in procurement regulations is also an opportunity to reinforce the system, it needs to be highlighted that this has been challenging in the past. There are very few Welsh language responses from businesses tendering for the Council's work.

Work in the **occupational health** and **health and safety** field that is outlined in question 1 continues.

The **Research and Information** Service will continue to monitor and try to influence the national developments in gathering information on the Welsh language situation if no Census will be carried out again.

A great deal of work is undertaken by the **Democracy and Language** Service, including:

Attitude towards the Welsh language and use of the language by Gwynedd residents

- The language and scrutiny unit has been collaborating with Bangor University on two research projects. The first looks at people's attitude towards the Welsh language and use of the language through an on-line questionnaire. The work of analysing the results of the questionnaires is currently taking place.

The second project focuses on public language choice when using front-line services provided by or on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd. The language use of the public was observed at 'Siop Gwynedd' receptions, libraries and leisure centres in three different geographical locations in Gwynedd namely Caernarfon, Pwllheli and Dolgellau. Data about people's language choice was also collected when they contacted the Galw Gwynedd centre, which provides a front-line service to deal with phone calls from residents across the county. A data sample of over 3200 was obtained. The work of analysing the results is currently taking place with a view to formulate recommendations to be included in the Gwynedd language strategy programme of work over the coming year, to promote the use of Welsh.

Project 15 - The work of Project 15 (which aims to promote the social use of Welsh on social media) has been announced for tender bids on Sell to Wales. It will undertake the creative work for a year and create a report about the future options of the project to develop it according to the needs of the audience. It is hoped that someone will start work in the new financial year.

Clear communication - Efforts are being put into improving the Council's language of communication and dispelling the myth that perfect Welsh is needed to work for Cyngor Gwynedd. By collaborating together within the department's teams, the Language Unit, Learning and Development, HR and Communications have set up projects to adapt job descriptions to make them simpler and more accessible, created training on how to use clear Welsh and videos that dispel the myth of working for the Council.

Gwynedd language initiative - Considerable work has been undertaken in recent years to provide support to establish Menter Iaith Gwynedd into an independent and sustainable language initiative that will support the Welsh language in communities across Gwynedd. Transfer agreements have now been signed, and following the TUPE process in the new year, it is hoped that staff will transition to the independent language initiative by 1 April 2025. Collaboration for the benefit of the Welsh language will continue with the Menter Iaith in future.

**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?**

The Procurement Service has recently seen that businesses are starting to use Artificial Intelligence or *AI to create tender responses, this technology will obviously be in English initially.*

The Research and Information Service has researched, and solved, how to design information dashboards bilingually so that they work the same in both languages and without the need to populate them twice, and that it can be easily moved between one language and another. They have also been working with the Welsh Government to ensure the adoption of Welsh names on neighbourhoods (Lower Layer Output Areas) in Gwynedd, to use them when reporting information about areas.

The lack of adequate provision on 'Teams' to enable simultaneous translation has been a barrier for some years, with the Council successfully using Zoom to overcome the problem. However, that has also created some hurdles, with a few partners refusing to use the technology. Further steps have been made very recently by further developing Teams, and we will be experimenting with the provision and technology we have within the Council over the coming months.

Social media analytics technology does not work in Welsh (e.g. measuring sentiment, the use of "tags", organising campaigns). This means we are unable to use the technology to the fullest.

Press monitoring services do not monitor Welsh language media, so we are forced to do the monitoring ourselves.

Platforms like YouTube offer auto-generated subtitles and transcription, but it does not work in Welsh, which means we have to produce it ourselves, which takes longer.

The Council's website is being developed using artificial intelligence. The fact that it needs to be "learned" in two languages slows down the process.

**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 **Procurement** Service does not collect data at present. National procurement systems are being developed to capture information about companies, as part of this there has been a reference to the possibility that the number of Welsh speakers within companies will be captured. However, we will continue to push for improvement in this area and the Council will need to report on this measure as part of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act.

The **Communication and Engagement** Service collects data on uptake of the Council's website through the medium of Welsh.

A lot of data is collected by the **Organisational Learning and Development** Service, which includes:

Language training - The Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer retains information on the language levels of all Council staff (using the language self-assessment questionnaire available on Staff Self-Service) as well as information on all Council staff attending language training.

Across the Council, 24 members of staff are currently receiving language training, with 7 registered on training which is yet to commence. A consultative conversation was held with 5 other members of staff who have yet to register on a suitable course.

Apprenticeships – General data is collected about language mediums in relation to providers, but no data is currently collected about provision within the Council e.g. "7.5% choose to study their subject through the medium of Welsh (at University/College)".

Provider Language Report (Apprenticeships) - A report has been produced with the help of officers and the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor which presents the current situation and outlines our plans for the next 3 years to improve the situation by collaborating with the apprentices themselves and the external providers, e.g. Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Bangor University and Coleg Cambria. To monitor the situation, we will collect information annually through a questionnaire which is sent to all Council apprentices.

Corporate Training – It is on the MoDS system that a record of what medium staff have carried out their training is collected. The data for 2024 is:

<b>Hyfforddiant Corfforaethol2024</b>	Cymraeg	Saesneg	Dwyieithog
Nifer Digwyddiadau	320	60	16
Nifer Unigolion Unigryw	1,192	208	98

## 5. What are the language skills of your staff?

There are 176 staff members in the Corporate Services Department. Of the 176, **166** have completed the language questionnaire and 168 have some form of language assessment (they completed the questionnaire or received a simple assessment from a line manager).

In terms of dispersion of language levels, there are 8 individuals at Intermediate level, 39 at Advanced level and 119 at Proficiency level. 2 individuals have received a language assessment from their line manager and 8 do not yet have a language assessment.

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

Below are examples from the Corporate Services Department of obstacles, complaints and praise associated with the provision and promotion of Welsh-medium services:

**Praise:**

Menter Iaith Gwynedd officers came out on top in the Mentrau Iaith Cymru awards. There was an award of excellence for the work undertaken with the Croeso Cymraeg project - North Wales Africa Society. It was also good to hear praise at a seminar by the Welsh Language Commissioner on the good practice of language strategies for Cyngor Gwynedd's decision to produce a 10-year rather than 5-year Welsh language strategy. In addition, very positive independent observations have been received from visitors from the Basque Country and Bangor University regarding the bulk of work being undertaken to promote the Welsh language on the ground through so many different projects led by the Language Unit and the Council.

**Obstacles:**

Lack of availability of Welsh-medium provision by public sector partners such as WLGA and North Wales Police. This shortcoming means that we as an organisation are given extra work to constantly establish an alternative way of working. The field of training is one example.

The Procurement Service states that businesses do not look at Welsh versions of tenders and that they tend to respond in English. Procurement regulations, templates and guidelines tend to be produced in English, cost and time of translation, higher costs of obtaining systems/services through the medium of Welsh, and an argument that there is less risk in having a monolingual contract.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024:

[Corporate Support Department Welsh Language Promotion Plan.pdf](#)