



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, TUESDAY, 29TH APRIL, 2025

Location

Virtual Meeting

Contact Point

Rhodri Jones

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LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (10)

Councillors

Rhys Tudur
Menna Baines
Alan Jones Evans
Olaf Cai Larsen
Meryl Roberts

Beca Brown
Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn
Jina Gwyrfa
Gwynfor Owen
Elfed Williams

Independent (5)

Councillors

Beth Lawton
Rob Triggs
Hefin Underwood

Gwilym Jones
Anne Lloyd-Jones

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

Other Invited Member

Councillor Llio Elenid Owen, 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 - 11

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 28 January 2025, be signed as a true record (attached)

5. REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2033

12 - 16

To consider the report.

6. REPORT OF THE ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2033

17 - 29

To consider the report

7. REPORT TO CONCLUDE THE LANGUAGE DESIGNATIONS PROJECT

30 - 41

To consider the report.

8. REPORT OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND LEGAL SERVICES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE REALISATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023 - 2033

42 - 49

To consider the report.

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE: 28 JANUARY 2025

PRESENT:

Councillors: Menna Baines (Chair)
Meryl Roberts (Vice-chair)

Alan Jones Evans, Jina Gwyrfai, Olaf Cai Larsen, Gwynfor Owen, Elfed Williams, Beca Brown, 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) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Item 5: Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education Department) and Rhys Meredydd Glyn (Head of Gwynedd Immersion Education System)

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Rhys Tudur and Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn.

Councillor Beca Brown was welcomed to her first meeting of the Committee and Councillor Llio Elenid Owen was thanked for her contribution to the Committee over the past few years, explaining that she was no longer a Member of the Committee due to her new appointment to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent items were received.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 22 October 2024, as a true record.

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.

The report was presented by the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System and the Head of the Education Department. They referred briefly to the following main points:

It was reported on a project conducted jointly between the Gwynedd Youth Service and the Urdd aimed at increasing opportunities for young people to take part in activities through the medium of Welsh. It was explained that the aim of the project was to provide more opportunities for young people to use the Welsh language outside of school, increasing their confidence in the language. It was detailed that 5 Community Aelwydydd had been developed in the Felinheli, Bangor, Caernarfon, Ardudwy and Bala areas, offering various activities outside school hours. It was confirmed that these activities were currently held at six secondary schools, but it was emphasised that they hoped to expand on this collaborative project to more secondary schools in the future through further collaboration with the Urdd, Cell B, Gisda and Menter Iaith Gwynedd.

It was explained that the Gwynedd Youth Service received a grant worth £20,000 annually from the Welsh Government to try to increase young people's confidence in the Welsh language. It was noted that the Service's focus was on areas proving challenges with the Welsh language, such as Bangor and Dolgellau. It was acknowledged that this grant had come to an end at the end of the current financial year and, therefore, there was a need to ensure that the work was funded through alternative methods in the future.

Reference was made to modernising plans and expanding on the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children, confirming that the work of building and modernising in Phase 1 had been completed. It was detailed that this phase was a project worth £1.1 million to create immersion units that transition Primary and Secondary education. It was confirmed that a new Immersion Unit had been built in Tywyn and it had officially opened on 20 January 2025. It was acknowledged that there had been a short slippage in the timetable of this development, but the Unit was now ready to receive Welsh learners. In the same manner, it was confirmed that Phase 2 of the modernising developments of the immersion provision was underway with new units being developed in Dolgellau and Maesincla. It was confirmed that the current unit at Llanybi would be moving to the Ysgol Cymerau, Pwllheli site. It was hoped that the three new units would be operational from the summer term 2025.

It was confirmed that the virtual 'Aberwla' ITC project had now been completed. It was explained that the project gave Welsh learners an opportunity to gain confidence to use the language socially in virtual locations before communicating in Welsh in their communities. It was explained that these virtual locations included a glamping field, a supermarket, a garage, a café, a leisure centre and a library. It was emphasised that this project was innovative, and work was being done to trial it in other areas in Wales, including Wrexham, Ynys Môn, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Sir Gâr, Bro Morgannwg and Ceredigion.

It was confirmed that Bangor University had been commissioned to conduct an evaluation of the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd. It was noted that they had conducted engagement meetings with stakeholders, as well as observing learners in the immersion units as part of the evaluation. It was explained that a final report with detailed feedback was expected in March 2025. In the same manner, it was confirmed that officers had presented a report on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to the Welsh Government and had received positive feedback. It was emphasised that GwE provided support to the transitional schools to ensure that potent arrangements were in place to increase the Welsh medium education provision.

Members were reminded that a series of engagement sessions to discuss Cyngor Gwynedd's current Education Language Policy had been held recently, with support from the Freelance Language Adviser as a facilitator. It was explained that 20 sessions with various stakeholders had been held and the freelance Language Adviser collated all the

information to draw-up a new draft Education Language Policy that reflected the discussions held.

Attention was drawn to the valuable work of Menter Iaith Gwynedd as they worked with the immersion system, schools and communities for the 'Arwyr Iaith' project. It was explained that this project allowed pupils who had attended the immersion centres to work on an event in Welsh to show their new language skills with the wider community. This project was recently praised in the Botwnnog area and it was hoped that the success of the project would encourage more communities to celebrate the successes of new speakers. They were proud that the project was currently operational in the Tregarth, Porthmadog and Manod areas.

An update was provided that the brand-new Language Charter Framework had been launched, with several training sessions conducted for Gwynedd schools staff. It was explained that the coordinator worked to establish bronze, silver and gold awards when validating the Language Charter.

During the discussion, the following observations were made: -

The Youth Service and the Urdd were congratulated for their work in establishing Community Aelwydydd, and it was asked how the data regarding activities was gathered. It was considered that 19,625 participations were high given the general Welsh language levels. In response to the enquiry, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System confirmed that the figure included every individual who had attended events, noting that it included the same individual if they attended more than one event. It was noted that the method of gathering data would be adapted to ensure clarity in the future.

It was asked whether the Department worked with local rugby clubs and the Young Farmers' Organisation in Gwynedd, as they were organisations that operated a lot through the medium of Welsh and working with them would be another way of gaining young people's confidence in the Welsh language. In response, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System noted that working with these organisations was a good idea in the future with benefits for the young people of Gwynedd and the Welsh language. It was emphasised that the importance of the Young Farmers' Wales organisation was stressed as part of the Department and the Language enterprise's work as an example of informal situations for Welsh learners and speakers to practise their Welsh skills.

The Youth Service was congratulated for providing over 3000 activities and it was asked whether there were any plans underway to ensure that activities would be held in the Arfon and Dwyfor areas in the future. In addition, it was asked whether there was any data available for the number of attendees who noted that they enjoyed using the Welsh language during the sessions, as well as more qualitative data for the future. In response to the observations, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System confirmed that the number of activities was praiseworthy and the relevant officer was to be commended, he explained that a grant worth £20,000 funded the employment of the individual who steered this work. It was also emphasised that the individual worked closely with officers in schools to ensure that additional independent events were being organised in addition to the officer's work. It was acknowledged that event attendees were not asked whether they enjoyed using the Welsh language and further discussions had been held to ensure that this would be added in the future, as well as presenting more qualitative data.

The arrangements of the Immersion System in Gwynedd were praised, considering whether it was possible to immerse more people into the language. It was noted that 195 individuals had been immersed this year and it was asked whether it was possible to increase this figure. In response to the enquiry, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion

Education System confirmed that receiving 195 individuals to the Centres was very high. It was emphasised that the training received here was very specialised and it would cause a risk to the quality of the training and disrupt the homely nature of the Centres should there be more attendees.

The evaluation of the Immersion System was discussed, and more information was requested regarding which individuals have had the opportunity to present observations. In response, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System explained that teachers and headteachers from schools who had pupils attend the immersion Centres had been invited to share observations as part of the evaluation. It was added that pupils and parents had also given their opinions to ensure that the evaluation was as detailed as possible.

It was asked how many latecomers had attended the Immersion Centres, as well as how many individuals between years 2 and 9 were there. In response, it was explained that this data had not been gathered and it would be substantial work to gather the data from schools. However, it was detailed that there was no expectation for the individuals to reach the same standards at the same time, as the system had been formed to ensure that everyone was learning the language on a scale that adapted to them as individuals. It was emphasised that a detailed progress report was provided to the schools after the schools ended their period at the Centres to ensure that the teachers were aware of the individual's understanding of the language in order to provide appropriate support in the future.

Pride was expressed that regaining confidence weeks were held for pupils in years 7-9, asking whether there were plans to expand this to other schools in the future. The Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System explained that this plan had been brought to the attention of some officers following a meeting of a national network that shared good practice regarding the Welsh language. It was emphasised that it was an important plan, and the wish was for it to be presented wider in Gwynedd. However, it was acknowledged that challenges arose when considering that transport budgets disrupted the ability to realise the projects.

It was asked whether the Education Department gathered data on the linguistic impact of those areas where small schools had closed due to the low number of pupils. In response, the Head of the Education Department confirmed that detailed consideration had been given to the Welsh language when considering closing schools, as the Department completed an Equality Impact Assessment regarding the decision. It was explained that these assessments most often noted that there were no linguistic risks arising from closing schools because there were arrangements in place to ensure that the children's education language remained the same as they attended another school. It was emphasised that there was no data regarding long-term linguistic impact gathered by the Department as this was not a required consideration as part of the legal processes.

It was noted that 73.2% of Year 11 pupils studied at least five Key Stage 4 subjects through the medium of Welsh, as well as a Welsh First Language GCSE. It was added that 84.2% of Year 11 pupils sat a Welsh Second Language GCSE examination. It was asked what work was being done to ensure that these figures increased in the next few years. In response, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System explained that many projects were underway to ensure that there was an increase in the Welsh provision of GCSE subjects. It was mentioned that GwE worked with Gwynedd transitional schools to help them with this requirement. In addition, it was confirmed that a plan was being developed jointly with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, for the next 3-5 years to increase teachers' confidence to teach GCSE subjects through the medium of Welsh.

It was asked what use of information technology was being made within the Education Department to promote the Welsh language. The Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System ensured that information technology was consistently used to promote the Welsh language, drawing further attention to the 'Aberwla' resource. It was elaborated that work was being done to encourage individuals to use social websites in Welsh. It was emphasised that every pupil received a laptop device as they attended secondary school for them to be able to complete their work. It was confirmed that these devices were installed with software with Welsh settings. Attention was also drawn to Welsh Artificial Intelligence (AI) being used to help headteachers in some situations.

Reference was made to a 2024 Progress Report of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27 of the Early Years service, drawing attention that 47.49% of provision is in Welsh only. It was elaborated that a further 47.10% was provided bilingually, and it was considered how this would be monitored. The Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System emphasised that work was being undertaken jointly with Mudiadau Meithrin to ensure that the language was promoted. It was added that training and recruitment campaigns were also underway to ensure that Welsh-only provision was progressing in the future.

It was noted that the statistic of 64% skilled pupils in Welsh and English was low, asking which steps were in place to ensure that more pupils were skilled in Welsh. In response, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System emphasised that definitions within the field were blurred but the figures of Welsh speakers were higher than that. In addition to the 64%, a further 8.8% were stronger in their Welsh than English and another 21.3% of pupils were stronger in English than Welsh, but there was an understanding of the Welsh language. It was explained that 94.2% had a strong understanding of the Welsh language. It was considered that this was a positive development although work was required to see progress in the future.

Attention was drawn to the fact that 55.57% of the Department staff had not achieved the Language Self-assessment to note that they reached the language designation of their posts. It was considered that there was no substantial change to be seen in these levels since last year. In response to the concerns, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System confirmed that there was no increase in these figures as a large proportion of the department staff such as catering staff and cleaners, had no access to the 'Self-service' system as they did not have a technology account or equipment to be able to complete the questionnaires. It was confirmed that this was a consideration for the Department and discussions were being held to get to grips with this challenge.

Reference was made to the engagement meetings to discuss Gwynedd's new Education Language Policy, drawing attention to the fact that this item would be discussed by the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 13 February 2025. It was asked whether the Members of this Committee could attend the discussion. In response to the enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that a request could be sent to the Chair of that Committee for members of the Language Committee to be present in the discussion, and Members were also reminded that a live webcast of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee was also available if they wished to watch from home.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

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

2. To ask the Chair of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee whether the Welsh Language Committee Members could attend the meeting on 13 February 2025 to listen to the discussion as the 'Education Language Policy' is scrutinised by the Members.

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

The report was submitted by the Head of Corporate Services Department, and he referred briefly to the following main points:

It was explained that the Department's name had recently changed from 'Corporate Support' to 'Corporate Services' to convey the range of services that are part of the Department.

It was confirmed that the Department was leading on six priority projects within the Council Plan 2023-2028 and promoted the Welsh language at every opportunity. It was added that the Department also supported many other projects in the Plan, namely Ffordd Gwynedd Plan Priorities 2023-2028. It was detailed that the Department was leading and contributed extensively towards realising priorities, namely:

- A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce
- Workforce Planning and Talent Development
- The Council's Digital Plan

It was reported that the Information and Research Service was in regular discussions with the Office for National Statistics. It was explained that the Office for National Statistics had considered not conducting Censuses in the future and considered gathering data in other ways to gather similar information. It was noted that the Service and the Department had considered that continuing with the Census in its current form was an important practice to continue.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Support Service continued to develop staff training modules bilingually through the internal Self-service system. It was added that they had been in contact with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) office in Liverpool to put pressure on them to develop an online application form in Welsh, asking for an update for when that form will be available for use.

Reference was made to the work of the Democracy and Language Service, mentioning the Language Awareness sessions, the Gwynedd Language Forum, the Welsh language in business, Partnership Boards, Place Names Project and Visitors from the Basque Country.

Pride was expressed that Cyngor Gwynedd had been nominated for an 'Employer of the Year' award at the North Wales Work-Based Learning Awards 2025, following the Department's work to promote the Welsh language and influence providers to provide courses through the medium of Welsh to trainees and apprentices employed by Cyngor Gwynedd.

It was confirmed that influential work had been undertaken in the Procurement field as new Procurement regulations had been developed for the future. It was emphasised that the Procurement Service had influenced those discussions to ensure that the Welsh language was central to the Procurement process in the future.

Menter Iaith Gwynedd officers were congratulated for coming out on top in the Mentrau Iaith Cymru awards recently. It was explained that the award related to their work on developing Croeso Cymraeg.

It was explained that Artificial Intelligence (AI) was a development that the Department was aware of, using it when appropriate whilst being mindful of the challenges of using it. It was noted that this field will receive ongoing consideration from the Department as it developed over the next few years.

It was reported that 166 of the 176 staff members within the Department had completed the language self-assessment. It was confirmed that 119 individuals who had completed it were at Proficiency Level, 39 individuals at Advanced Level and 8 individuals at Intermediate Level. It was explained that the 10 staff members who had not completed the questionnaire thus far were new and they would complete the questionnaire as soon as possible, in accordance with the Department's emphasis to stress its importance.

During the discussion, the following observations were made: -

Concern was expressed that the Office for National Statistics had considered amending the arrangements regarding conducting the census and it was asked whether they had other future options. In response to the enquiry, the Head of Corporate Services Department agreed that it was important to ensure that data was gathered, and the Data and Research service disagreed with the suggestion of bringing the census to an end. However, it was noted that the Service welcomed change if it could be guaranteed that all the necessary data was gathered through new methods. It was emphasised that the Department encouraged the Office for National Statistics to continue with the Census.

Attention was drawn to a new project underway within the Department where the Language Unit, Learning and Development, Human Resources and the Communication team collaborated to dispel language myths. In response to an enquiry about some of the current myths, the Head of Corporate Services Department explained that the public tended to believe that Welsh skills had to be perfect to work in the Council. It was detailed that this cross-service work aimed to amend job descriptions to make them simpler and more accessible, emphasising that some posts required different levels of Welsh language ability. The Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor added that this work derived from the Council's role on the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board which was trying to develop a series of videos demonstrating the actual and different language needs for posts within the Council. It was also noted that there was support available for anyone who required it to improve their Welsh skills, or their confidence to use the language, that was provided by the Council. It was acknowledged that language myths were a specific challenge for recruiting in the Care field, but work was being done to dispel these myths by using the Council's resources and developing specific resources for this field through the Public Services Board.

An enquiry was made about the arrangements of the Registration service, considering whether it was possible to use Welsh or bilingual forms to register births and deaths by now. In response to the enquiry, the Head of Corporate Services Department confirmed that it was currently not possible to use Welsh or bilingual forms as the Service's administration systems did not allow this. However, it was emphasised that the discussions with service users were being held in Welsh where possible. The Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser added that these challenges derived from the Westminster Government and ongoing lobbying was

taking place to ensure that the language was seen on the appropriate forms in the future.

It was asked what were the arrangements for those staff members who needed to attend language training as they were learning Welsh from the start, considering whether they had time off work and financial support for subscriptions such as 'Say Something in Welsh'. In response to the enquiry, the Head of Corporate Services Department confirmed that specific arrangements were being made for every staff member learning Welsh based on their individual needs. It was ensured that weekly training was provided within normal working hours in sessions of up to 3 hours between September and June, and staff members were released from work to attend them. It was added that the 'Language Training Hub' site demonstrated to staff what was available in addition to this. It was confirmed that information about new training was shared quarterly following meetings of the Language Designation Forum. It was explained that no staff member had requested support with subscriptions, but learners were welcomed to make use of Say Something in Welsh or Duolingo if they wished.

More information regarding the recent visit from representatives from the Basque Country was enquired. In response, the Language Adviser confirmed that this visit was informal jointly with Bangor University, ARFOR, Menter Iaith Gwynedd and the Economy and Community Department. It was explained that the Language Unit had provided a presentation on Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Policy, information about the Language Strategy, promoted the Menter Iaith's work and drew attention to other important organisations. Pride was expressed that the visitors from the Basque Country believed that Cyngor Gwynedd's arrangements were very ambitious and innovative. The Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser added that the visitors from the Basque Country gave a financial investment to the language to ensure that it was central to the country's general operation. It was noted that this was not always true in Wales and Cyngor Gwynedd led the way by developing an innovative Language Policy and Strategy which influenced other organisations.

It was asked whether community consultation work was happening through the Place Names Project, referring to Eryri National Park's far-reaching plan which invited local residents to record the names of buildings and local areas on a map. In response to the observations, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser confirmed that similar work had been conducted by Cyngor Gwynedd during the National Eisteddfod in Boduan. It was acknowledged that no more sessions had been held to not disrupt the important work that the Park already does in the field. However, it was noted that the observation would be considered when drawing up the work programme for the coming year.

In response to an enquiry on Cadernid Iaith training, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser confirmed that this training continued to be held. It was explained that the aim of the training was to try to ensure that discussions did not turn to English unnecessarily, ensuring that people continued to use Welsh politely in community situations to teach others about the language.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and note the observations received.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.45am.

CHAIR

Date	29 April, 2025
Department	Housing and Property
Author	Carys Fôn Williams, Head of Housing and Property

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:

Cyngor Gwynedd Housing Action Plan

The Housing Action Plan contains over 30 ambitious and exciting schemes aiming to tackle the housing crisis in Gwynedd. The aim of each scheme is to ensure that Gwynedd residents have access to quality, affordable housing which improves their standard of life.

Already over 8,000 local individuals have received support and assistance in various ways through the Housing Action Plan, be that receiving a grant or Council tax exemption to renovate an empty house, a loan through the Homebuy Scheme, supported housing through one of our schemes for the homeless, or a grant for disable people to make home adaptations so that they are able to continue to live independently at home.

An example of such a scheme that goes head on to tackle the lack of homes for locals is the Empty Homes Scheme. 101 grants have been given to purchasers of vacant homes with a local connection so that they can be renovated to an acceptable living standard. In the Welsh National Eisteddfod 2023 in Boduan, it was declared that vacant homes which were previously second homes would now be eligible to receiving funding – a step which has ensured the possibility of recovering previously empty, dormant second homes and turning them into cosy, quality, affordable homes for the people of Gwynedd.

Furthermore, to meet the demand, the Scheme's eligibility criteria was expanded in the end of 2024 to include all types of purchasers (rather than first time buyers only), and to address the increase in materials and building costs, the maximum available grant for each application has also been increased.

A thorough consideration has been made to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as this Plan was put together, including the goal surrounding the Welsh language, and each scheme in the Plan shows how they contribute towards those goals.

As part of preparing an Impact Assessment on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh language and Socio-economic disadvantage, the Plan is considered to have a positive effect on all equality characteristics and the Welsh language by increasing the number and breadth of houses within the county addressing the needs of different communities. There will be a positive effect on the Welsh language by helping approximately 63% of Gwynedd residents that have been priced out of the market have access to affordable homes, or through loans, grants, tax reliefs etc. The data recently collected by the Housing Association Adra on one of their new estates in Dinas, Llanwnda indicates that 94% of new residents can speak Welsh. A similar review on another new estate in Tregarth indicates that 96% of residents on that estate can speak Welsh.

A report will be presented to the Cabinet in May this year summarising the latest progress of the Housing Action Plan, along with outlining next steps in the wake of extending the Plan to 2028/29. We are confident that extending the Plan for an extra two years will enable us to support and help thousands more of Gwynedd people over its lifetime.

Cyngor Gwynedd Housing Strategy 2019-24

The aims and objectives of the Strategy is as true today as they were when the document was put together in 2019 and the Housing Action Plan continues to directly tackle those objectives. The current Strategy's period recently came to an end, and work to update it for the next period is currently underway.

Projects in the Council's plan

A Homely Gwynedd

- **Increasing the supply of housing for local people** – this priority's objective is to ensure that those who are in need have access for a suitable, affordable, quality home, whether that is having the opportunity for a social or intermediate housing tenancy, an opportunity to purchase a home, or the opportunity to renovate and bring an empty, disused house back into use. Through the fact that 97% of social housing allocations go to someone with a Gwynedd connection, and roughly 60% to someone with a connection to the community in which they wish to live, our Common Housing Allocations Policy goes as far as possible to ensure that local people are given reasonable priority when allocating housing. Our intermediate housing lettings also attracts several local families when advertised through Tai Teg, with 10 families on average applying for every available house. By providing grants to new owners to bring empty houses back to an acceptable living standard, we succeed in supporting an average of over 3 local contractors on each application. This helps local companies and the local economy.
- **Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty** – this priority offers support to a number of people who can't afford to heat their homes, which in turn causes a real danger to their health and wellbeing. This can then lead to needing to move out of their home, and possibly out of the county, to find a suitable home. We

work closely with partners to facilitate energy-saving schemes, and provide grants and energy vouchers to help residents who are in fuel poverty. To date, almost 670 homes have seen their energy performance certificate (EPC) improve, and 4,487 energy vouchers have been distributed to Gwynedd people.

Other projects and schemes

Gwynedd Common Housing Allocations Policy

The Gwynedd Common Housing Allocations Policy is among the strongest policies in Wales in protecting and giving priority to local people within the allocations process. As mentioned above, an average of 97% of allocations through the housing register go to someone with a Gwynedd connection, and roughly 60% go to someone with a connection to the community in which they wish to live. We believe this gives the best chance possible for locals to secure social tenancies, while also allowing the Council to comply with its statutory duty to accommodate individuals and families in a variety of vulnerable situations.

The Department and the Council have received numerous correspondence from some community councils and community groups calling for the inclusion of a language condition as part of the allocations process. This matter has been raised on a corporate level for guidance, and the Council is receiving legal advice on the matter.

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)

- Update the Welsh Language Impact Assessment on the Common Housing Allocations Policy – this will be done at the same time as possible modifications to the Policy as a result of new legislation in the area of Homelessness).
- Continue to take every possible opportunity within our ability to help local Gwynedd people have access to affordable homes by continuing to offer opportunities for tenancies, grants, loans or support.

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?

Generally speaking, our main back-office systems purchased from external companies are available in English only, however the Department makes great use of internally-developed apps (through Microsoft PowerApps software), and these are all created in Welsh only.

Over the last year, the Department has been through the process of establishing a new system for our Homelessness Service and in the process of setting up a new system for our Housing Options unit. A key part of the Housing Options system is providing access to a new online portal, an exciting move towards digitising the housing options journey.

Current procedures depend on telephoning or completing a paper form, however, in the future, individuals will be able to submit an application online, see the status of their application, message the Housing Options Team and update their application form – all online. This will make things easier for everyone and provide more people with more options on how to get in touch with us. Traditional processes (telephone, paper applications etc) will also still be available to anyone not comfortable or do not have access to the internet.

We managed to ensure that the portal will be available completely bilingually. The timetable has slipped due to issues on the Welsh side by the company, but discussions are ongoing to resolve these translation issues before opening the portal to the public. Unfortunately, it was not possible to ensure that the back-office system (used internally by officers) is available in Welsh – translating the system would incur significant extra costs that are beyond the available budget. However, this will not impact the ability of the public to be able to access their information or the portal 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 social housing application form records an individual's language of choice for communication only, and it does not form part of the allocations process. Our current system does not enable us to report this data, but once the new system (mentioned above) is operational, we will be able to report this data.

The Homelessness Service have begun to record an individual's language of choice for correspondence and contact by the Service since the new system began being used in autumn 2024. Because this is a new process, the data is not fully complete, however the data we do have indicated that approximately 25% wishes correspondence and contact in Welsh, 62% in English and 13% in another language.

We ensure that all initial correspondence always go out bilingually, with the Welsh language first, in order to encourage and promote the language wherever possible. We also ensure that any Department social media post is posted so that the Welsh is read first, e.g. we publish the English post first so that the Welsh post appears above and first in someone's social feed.

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

The latest Language Specifications report (March 2025) indicates that 100% of the Housing and Property Department's staff have received some kind of assessment (whether that be a self-assessment or a line manager assessment). 88.1% have completed a self-assessment, and we intend to look at ways of reaching those that have only received a line manager assessment.

Of these, 95.4% reach the Language Specifications of their posts, however we note that many of those just lack confidence, and they actually do have the ability to provide a bilingual service to Gwynedd residents. The vast majority of our workforce are on Proficiency or Advanced level.

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

The housing and property field makes significant use of systems but as mentioned above, there is a lack of Welsh language provision for these systems. All effort is made to ensure any public-facing system is available bilingually, however developing back-office systems that are available in Welsh would be very costly, often beyond the budget available and reasonable timescales, and therefore there is an obstacle for staff to use these in Welsh. However, all opportunities to develop our own systems and apps are taken, either in collaboration with the IT Service or internally, and these are all available in Welsh.

As already noted, correspondence has reached the Council calling for the inclusion of a language condition within the Housing Allocations Policy, and a process is currently underway to receive legal advice on the matter.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024: [Housing and Property Department Welsh Language Promotional Plan.pdf](#)

Report of the Economy and Community Department on the implementation of the Language Policy and contribution towards the realisation of the Welsh Language Strategy 2023- 2033

Date	29 April 2025
Department	Economy and Community
Author	Sioned E Williams

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

The Department's Services implement a package of projects which are in line with Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Policy.

Economic Development Service:

The ARFOR Programme has been in operation since 2019, in order to strengthen the economy of the west Wales region. The aim is to maintain and create work that would enable young people to stay and return to the region to work and protect and promote the use of the Welsh language. The region includes Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. Cyngor Gwynedd's Economic Development Service leads the work on behalf of the 4 counties, with the Welsh Government having invested £11m to support the work over the last 2 years.

As part of this work, we have created an Agreement of Principles for businesses/enterprises receiving financial support from the ARFOR Programme. Part of the agreement is partnering with the Welsh Language Commissioner to ensure that businesses/enterprises sign up to the Welsh Language Offer. In Gwynedd 20 businesses/enterprises have received the Welsh Language Offer with 36 having completed a language assessment.

A number of awareness raising sessions on increasing the visibility of the Welsh language were held by the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of the programme and 50 businesses have taken advantage of these sessions across the region.

In addition, ARFOR has held a Hac Iaith event in each county in order to highlight how businesses use the Welsh language and how it benefits from doing so. In Gwynedd, the Hac Iaith event was held in Bala by the Tebot company. A café in Bala was keen to increase their use of the Welsh language but weren't sure how to approach it. It was an opportunity to bring an audience together to be sharing ideas and giving feedback to the businesses of what they could do. The Menter Iaith has been involved in this work.

During 2024 the World's Most Welsh awards were held. This was a marketing campaign asking the people of the ARFOR Region to nominate businesses as the World's Most Welsh Business. It was a hugely successful campaign with over 100 nominations. In terms of results for Gwynedd, Caffi Maes Caernarfon was extremely successful, winning one of the main prizes.

Here are two examples of other schemes supported by the service through ARFOR over the past year:

- *C'mon Cymraeg*: a short series of podcasts has been created drawing on diverse voices to consider the impact of the Welsh language on the prosperity of ARFOR's businesses and communities. The first episode explored the idea of nurturing Welsh-speakers, and how to do so effectively in business and beyond.
- *Welsh Spaces ARFOR*: a page was created on the ARFOR website, and a marketing campaign was created asking the people of the ARFOR Region to nominate Welsh spaces where people can go to socialise or work through the Welsh language
[Welsh Spaces — Bwrlwm ARFOR](#)

Implementing ARFOR's work packages is part of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan priority project 'Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work'. It is now a condition in the allocation of grants, and wider support, such as SPF, that all businesses or enterprises receiving support from the Service must increase their use of Welsh. We are currently doing this by insisting that all applicants complete the Welsh Language Commissioner's language assessment. For some, this then means moving forward to work towards a Welsh Offer designation. However, the Welsh Language Commissioner officers seemingly do not have the capacity to support every business we refer to them, and so we are looking into alternative ways to ensure improved use of the Welsh language when providing business support.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service

The Department was able to secure a budget for the Diwylliesiant Project from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The aim of the project was to promote culture and heritage, physical well-being and healthy living, and develop a sustainable visitor economy. The main objectives and benefits were to support the well-being of Gwynedd's residents, communities, businesses and environment. One of the outputs of the project was implementing a 'Local to Us' digital marketing campaign with the main objectives of promoting the area's culture, heritage, language, landscape, local products, communities and outdoor opportunities.

As part of the project, new articles were produced by three freelance writers from Gwynedd, Anni Llŷn, Rhys Iorwerth and Casia Wiliam. Examples of the content were Golwg Newydd ar Hen Hanes which gave a flavour of the old legends of the area such as Rhys and Meinir at Nant Gwrtheyrn, Beddgelert, Chwedl Branwen over in Harlech and the victory of Y Ddraig Goch in Dinas Emrys. The Dathlu'r Diwylliant article promoted festivals and arts celebrations that were held in the area throughout the year and highlighted these opportunities to go and experience the language and culture of the area at its best, in the

company of the people of the area. The Celfyddyd a Diwylliant article shed light on locations within the area that offered a special arts or cultural experience and the Tafarndai Cymunedol article raised visitors' awareness of the special nature and number of community pubs in the area.

Several videos were produced by a videographer from Gwynedd for the website and social media and Welsh language music was used by 9 artists from Eryri and Pen Llŷn as background music for the video clips.

Regeneration Programmes Service:

The information we have online is bilingual and all marketing/promotional material is bilingual.

The North West Wales Slate Landscape is a specific area of work where the Welsh language is a cross-cutting theme within the Management Plan and is covered at all meetings of the Partnership Board. Discussions have been held to identify opportunities to monitor any impacts that could derive from projects developing from the designation on the Welsh language by collaborating with Bangor University and discussions continue on subsequent research.

The LleCHI LleNi project: Our World Heritage Site, Our Pride, Our Future in particular promotes the Welsh language as a community language across the slate area. The following are examples of specific schemes to promote the Welsh Language in the community:

- Dyffryn Nantlle Event – Language and Mythology – an event for an audience of newcomers to get a flavour of the language and pronunciation along with a session on mythology and culture.
- Tafod Tirwedd – a scheme that develops resources and activities for learners.
- Cwrs Cynefin a Chymuned – a course to develop ambassadors within the communities to promote the industry (and the language at its core) to visitors.
- Darganfod Geiriau - a joint project with Menter Iaith Gwynedd to collect key wording and names for the slate valleys and carve them on slate.

Community Support Service:

The Service provides information and support bilingually.

The community grants portal is administered bilingually and all third-party grant beneficiaries are required to provide a bilingual policy to meet the criteria.

Museums and Arts Service:

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

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

Through the SPF Grants and Community Arts, Supporting Arts and Sbarduno Grants during 2024/25, support has been given to cultural organisations and companies in Gwynedd to reach every part of the county and offer a Welsh and bilingual provision. It is hoped this will continue in 2025/6. For example, a number of artists under the Sbarduno Scheme have been supported to offer activities in the Welsh language

Those in receipt of an arts grant are required to accept the Council's language policy or have one of their own and indicate how many opportunities there are in the Welsh language

Gwynedd Archives Service:

The Archives and Museums Education Service provides materials and activities for schools across Gwynedd through the medium of Welsh in order for them to understand their communities, the importance of the Welsh language and local identity. This is done through a Service Level Agreement made with 75 primary schools, 7 secondary schools and 2 special schools committing to the agreement. Also, through the use of the Service's collections, the Archives Service offers activities in our communities and archives that promote the Welsh language. In addition, the Service collaborates with other organisations, such as the National Slate Museum, Gŵyl Arall etc. to carry out activities.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor:

Gwynedd libraries play a key role by supporting people to learn and speak Welsh, access reading and information resources in Welsh, learn about our culture and heritage and take part in Welsh-language and Welsh cultural activities. We work with key partners to ensure that Welsh-language resources are available to support all kinds of reading and information needs, and to support the needs of users who need access to books and other materials in Welsh in various formats. By providing access to Welsh books and resources, as well as activities in Welsh, we are contributing to the Welsh Government's ambition to increase the number of people who learn and speak Welsh and see the benefits of learning and speaking Welsh in order to improve skills and job opportunities, and strengthen a sense of national identity.

A varied programme of Welsh language events, whether film or a live performance, is also offered in Neuadd Dwyfor. The Neuadd is promoted as a Welsh Language Cultural Centre in Pen Llŷn and beyond.

The service continues to encourage staff teams to speak Welsh together and to assess any needs or support they require to communicate naturally with each other in Welsh.

Maritime:

All of our online services are available bilingually e.g. powerboat registration, berth applications and seasonal parking permits, as well as any material provided to customers or users of the coast e.g. safety pamphlets, code of conduct etc.

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)

Economic Development Service:

To date, there is no assurance that the ARFOR Programme will continue in 2025/26. Partners are awaiting confirmation from the Welsh Government on the financial situation.

We will be looking to secure an alternative approach to ensuring that businesses receiving support make better use of the Welsh language, accepting that the Welsh Language Commissioner does not have sufficient resources to work with all applicants. As part of this work the Department is in discussions with Business Wales Officers, Welsh Government to be creating a Welsh Language Business pledge. The hope is that this will be implemented in 2025-26.

Maritime:

In order to raise the status of the Welsh language, the service is taking deliberate steps to:

- Encourage and support staff to speak and correspond in Welsh.
- Provide training opportunities for staff to improve and learn the language.
- Celebrate the success of officers learning Welsh.
- Improve bilingual content in our harbours and on the county's beaches.

Museums and Arts Service

The Service recognises the need to:

- support learners or those who are less confident in speaking and using Welsh
- provide training opportunities for staff to improve and learn the language

In addition, the outcome of our Audience Development and Marketing commission through the CELF (The National Contemporary Art Gallery Network) scheme will provide feedback that may be of use to us in this area in the future.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor

- Promote the Welsh language as a living language by continuing to hold 'Paned a Sgwrs' sessions in our Libraries.
- Ensure that activities for children and families are either held in Welsh only or bilingually with the emphasis on Welsh as the main language.
- Ensure that priority is given to activities for adults where Welsh Learners are welcome and encouraged to take part.
- Continue to provide and maintain designated collections of resources for Learning Welsh in all libraries
- Promote the availability of Welsh language materials and resources through our digital platforms

- Maintain our local history collection and magazine collection in our main Stores and ensure that information about the collections is available to users.
- Collaborate with partners such as Menter Iaith, Cymraeg i blant and Mudiad Meithrin on specific plans and activities in the Libraries to attract families
- Continue to take a leading role in the administration of the Welsh Large Print Book scheme on behalf of Libraries Wales, by co-ordinating the Welsh Large Print book printing scheme with a view to ensuring that large print resources are made available in Welsh to those users who are struggling to read normal size print.
- Continue to work with the North Wales Society for the Blind to ensure that Welsh audiobooks are available for loan through Welsh Libraries and digitally through the national digital platform.
- Continue to maintain book resources of historical value through our 19th and 20th Century Children's Book collection held in the main Library Stores in Caernarfon
- Hold the Penygroes Library Annual Lecture in collaboration with the Dyffryn Nantlle Historical Society.
- Hold the Dafydd Orwig Memorial Lecture annually at Dyffryn Ogwen Library
- Collaborate with People's Collection to identify content for the website, training service staff to be able to do this and add photos and digital content that align with the strategic objectives.
- Act on the legacy of Diwylliesiant by focusing on the promotion of Welsh Language literature and attracting new readers of all ages.
- Continue to develop a wider programme in theatre with the emphasis on developing live Welsh-language evenings with bands and artists, such as Bwncath, Band Pres Llareggub, Fabrik Jam and Welsh-language Comedy Evening. As part of our Classic Films programme, we screen films such as Hedd Wyn.

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?

Maritime:

Microsoft's translation services have facilitated translation and encourage staff to correspond in Welsh. Programmes such as Cysill on-line or the 'Geiriaduron' app are also very useful. Some officers in the service use Artificial Intelligence software such as 'ChatGPT' to help with producing correspondence in Welsh. Technology makes it easier for our officers to learn, use and engage with the Welsh language.

Museums and Arts Service:

Online translation/Cysill has facilitated translation although the content still needs to be checked.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor:

We see opportunities to promote the Welsh language through our digital provisions. As an example, working with the North Wales Society for the Blind we are ensuring that Welsh-language audiobooks, e-books and Magazines are available to borrow digitally through the national digital platform.

Our Library app can be used through the medium of Welsh and we promote the use of Welsh through all our Social Media pages.

Taking a leading role in the emergence of the All Wales LMS, it will be possible to mine data on the all-Wales use of Welsh language resources. e.g. Library data shows that loans of Welsh books by children under the age of 7 often overtake loans of English books.

Regeneration Programmes:

Problems have arisen regularly that the translation provision does not always work on MS Teams.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service:

Cannot always use MS Teams when translation provision is required

Economic Development Service:

The ARFOR Programme has focused on technology and the Welsh Language promoting the availability of bilingual technology and the development of technology in Welsh within areas such as artificial intelligence.

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

Economic Development Service:

Business Support - all businesses requesting financial support are required to report on the language profile of their business. The following is a snapshot of the response of businesses requesting one of our recent business development grants:

All Welsh	26 (22%)
More Welsh than English	29 (25%)
Fully bilingual	26 (22%)
More English than Welsh	29 (25%)
All English	7 (6%)

Supporting people into work – the Gwaith Gwynedd team assesses the language skills of each person receiving support and offers help and support to improve Welsh language skills where appropriate.

The following is an analysis of the response of the individuals supported during the last financial year (24-25).

Understand Welsh	67%
Speak Welsh	59%
Read Welsh	57%
Writing in Welsh	56%

Each supported individual is offered a choice of which language they want us to use to communicate with them. Only 40% chose for us to communicate with them through the medium of Welsh over the past year.

ARFOR – several case studies have been created as part of the programme. Each scheme has recorded the use of business language through a beneficiary form. The programme monitoring, evaluation and learning will analyse the information by May 2025. We will then be able to report on:

- Number of Businesses/Organisations increasing their use of Welsh
- Number of individuals taking part in Welsh language skills improvement activities
- Heritage/culture/local produce/sense of place schemes supported
- Number of messages promoting the Welsh language/Identity
- Strengthening the relationship and collaborating with Mentrau Iaith

Gwynedd Archives Service:

When visiting schools or creating materials for schools, the Archives and Museums Education Officer of the Archives and Museums Service records the size of the classes receiving the material or visit. During 2024-2025, materials and sessions were provided through the medium of Welsh to 3,032 children.

When carrying out activities in the archives or community, the Archives Service counts attendance. During 2024-2025 activities were provided to 177 through the medium of Welsh.

Museums and Arts Service:

The number attending activities at the Museums in Welsh have been maintained. Around 3,500 have taken part.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor

- Our new LMS system that was launched in 2024 offers new opportunities to monitor and record information about Welsh language resource borrowing practices
- Each year we report on our performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards to the Welsh Government's Culture Division. For this report we collect data about our loans/events and opportunities we offer. During 2023-24, 66,163 Welsh language items were borrowed, and 1,371 activities were provided in Welsh – attended by 23,512 Gwynedd residents. (Figures for 2024-25 not yet published due to the new LMS system, however we anticipate that they will be similar).
- We store and collect data about all Neuadd Dwyfor events including Welsh language films and performances.

Maritime:

Power Boat Registration Applications	
Language of those submitted	Number
Welsh	4
English	2472
Berth Applications	
Language of those submitted	Number
Welsh	0
English	197

The number of forms completed in Welsh through our online service in 2024/25 is very low, with only 4 forms completed in Welsh out of the 2,669 submitted, or 0.15%. This is to be expected as most powerboat owners and berth-holders are visitors.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service:

A record is kept in terms of the number who find information and/or follow us on our digital platforms through the medium of Welsh.

We have a Welsh and English account for Facebook, X and Instagram. We use Welsh terms on the English version to introduce and promote the Welsh language.

Number of users/followers of Eryri Mynyddoedd a Môr Welsh language social accounts.
Period April 24 – March 25:

Facebook – 1852

X (Twitter) – 475

Instagram – 934

One account is used for YouTube and TikTok where messages are published in both languages. This means that our followers all see our messages in Welsh as well as English. We use Welsh terms on the English version to introduce and promote the Welsh language.

Community Support Service:

The Service records attendees to 'Ardal Ni' events and the language of the attendees is recorded.

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

You will see an update on the language skills data of the Economy and Community Department staff for 2025 in Appendix 1.

Changes to jobs are constantly happening and we will continue to monitor the changes and the increase in language skills on a regular basis.

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

Maritime:

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

We encourage all customers who visit our offices to start every conversation in Welsh, and we also try to answer all phone calls with a bilingual message. The message under the e-mail signature of the majority of service staff welcomes anyone to use Welsh or English and we have previously received positive comments about this.



Croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg wrth gysylltu efo fi.
You are welcome to contact me in Welsh or English

Whilst we endeavour to display information bilingually at our destinations (on notice boards or in harbour offices) unfortunately, some information/material is only available in English, e.g. seafarers' manuals or safety posters.

External organisations such as the Police, Coastguard and RNLI correspond in English only, and specialist training e.g. oil pollution training is usually only offered through the medium of English. Some documents such as our Marine Safety Code and risk assessments are also written in English as it is necessary to share and discuss the content of these documents with external organisations, such as the Coastguard Agency, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch or the HSE.

Some of the service's seasonal officers do not have a Council email account which makes it a challenge for us to ensure they complete a language self-assessment; however, we are working with the Council's E-learning Officer to try and resolve the situation.

Museums and Arts Service

It is not always possible to work with artists who are Welsh speakers. If so, we support them to carry out the activities with a Welsh-speaking assistant. Artists who are learners will also be given the opportunity to use Welsh if they are confident to do so. Funding an additional assistant can be a challenge.

It is challenging at times to share information on social media which is relevant to the arts in Gwynedd, unless they are available bilingually.

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

ARFOR Regional Programme - praise has been given to how the ARFOR Programme works with stakeholders and brings together the Region's Language Policy Officers and the benefit of doing this. It enables us all to work closer, share ideas and work together to be paying attention to the Welsh language in the business/economic world.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor

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

The following is a quote from someone who attended - "The story sessions are the only exposure I have to Welsh nursery rhymes and Welsh stories."

As a result of a comment where new speakers asked to join a story session for children to improve their Welsh language skills, we have started 'Paned a Sgwrs' groups for new speakers in our Libraries, namely Abermaw, Cricieth and Bethesda libraries. These sessions are an opportunity to introduce various materials and resources available from the library, We believe that there is added value in holding the sessions in the main Library so that the public can hear the language being used in a natural and everyday way, giving everyone an opportunity to socialise and support each other.

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

Regeneration Programmes

Praise for all the activities and events that specifically focus on the Welsh language through the LleChi LleNi Scheme and in particular the Dyffryn Nantlle - Language and Mythology event (February 2025):

"It was a fab event. Thank you so much for setting it up! Can't wait for the next one!"

"Can we do it again?....soon!! "

"I never knew that the slate landscape surrounding my home had such a magical element. Diolch for the enlightment?"

"Thank you for organising this event, it was very informative, and you all did a great job. We learnt a lot to start us off with the Welsh language and we look forward to continue learning Welsh.

Thank you again and look forward to more events"

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024: [Economy and Community Department.pdf](#)

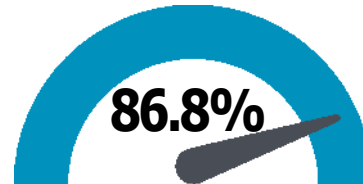
ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY

STAFF WHO HAVE COMPLETED A SELF-

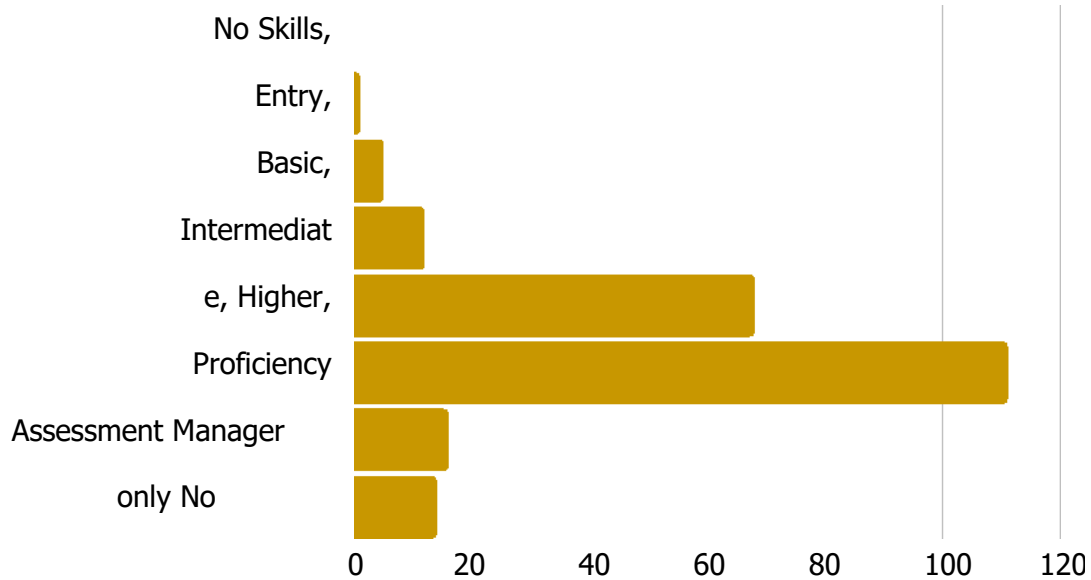
*Includes permanent, fixed-term and casual staff

NUMBER PERCENTAGE

197

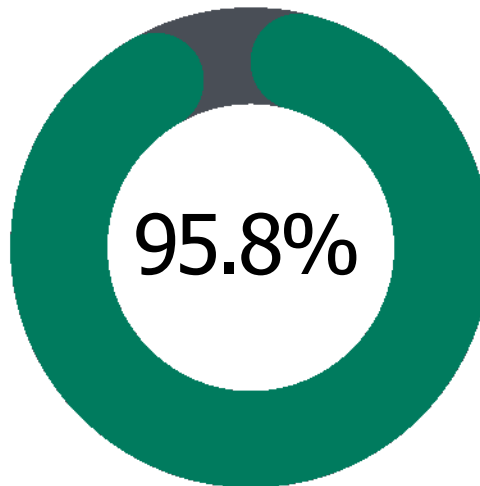


SPREAD LEVELS



REACHES THE LANGUAGE DESIGNATIONS

*NOTE: These percentages and figures include Line Manager assessment and staff Self



FURTHER INFORMATION

Learning and Developing Welsh

Since the last report one member of staff from the SPF North Team has continued with the weekly course to learn Welsh at Entry level 2. Two staff from the Maritime Service have continued to follow a weekly course to learn Welsh at Foundation 2/Intermediate level. A member of staff from the Maritime Service is now following an online Taster course.

A member of staff from the Maritime Service has also registered to follow the Confidence Building course which will begin in April 2025.

Of the **9** members of staff who do not reach their job language designations, **2** are receiving language training.

Collecting Assessments

Currently, there are **30** members of staff who have not submitted a language self assessment. Of those, **16** have received a language assessment by a line manager, therefore **14** members of staff have no language assessment at all.

Report to Conclude the Language Designations Project

Llio Mai Dafydd (Project Manager)

This report is submitted as was written in June 2023, with an additional update at the end.

Corporate Services Department

Improvement Priority 5 – Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services

1 Purpose

- 1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd has been at the forefront of ensuring that services for residents are available through the medium of Welsh, as we operate internally through the medium of Welsh. Promoting the use of the Welsh language within Council services is continuous work, and we are aware of the need to continue to maintain the language skills of our staff.
- 1.2 In addition, statutory requirements are imposed on the Council to implement and ensure Welsh language services through the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011). These Standards impose several duties on the Council in relation to recording the language skills of staff and assessing the linguistic needs of posts.
- 1.3 To ensure this, Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Policy also states that Council employees need to 'plan and provide to ensure that all services meet the needs of the local population from a linguistic point of view' and 'ensure that the user's language preference is always identified and respected'.
- 1.4 This project contributes to the main aim of the priority by looking specifically at the linguistic requirements of our posts and adapting them where necessary, as well as the individuals in those posts to ensure that we continue to offer the best service to the residents through the medium of Welsh. Alongside that, it is ensured that the support is available and offered in a timely and appropriate manner to those who need, or want, to raise the standard of their Welsh to meet the linguistic requirements set out on the Person Specification of their post. This is also stated in the Council's Language Policy under 11.11 - 'Council staff are required to be able to communicate effectively in Welsh and English up to an appropriate standard and in order to be able to carry out their duties in full'.
- 1.5 This project was implemented to look at two aspects in particular:
 1. Review the language requirements of our posts and adapting them where necessary to ensure that any new persons are appointed on the basis of

- realistic and appropriate language requirements taking into account the general requirements of the post
2. To ensure that current Council staff receive the necessary support to develop their skills or learn Welsh in order to reach the Language Designations of their post. Also ensure that there is support for members of staff who are already acting in accordance with the Language Designations of their post or higher to maintain the standard and develop further.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2015 the Language Committee decided to look at the procedure for recording the language skills of staff, in preparation for the implementation of the Language Standards in 2016 and in an effort to gain a better understanding of the exact skill level of staff, rather than just being able or not being able to speak Welsh.
- 2.2 In January 2016 a decision was made that the language requirements and conditions of the Council's jobs needed to be reviewed first to set realistic requirements alongside the duties of the post. For example:
 - **Teacher:** The requirements were kept at the highest level due to the nature of the job.
 - **Leisure Assistant:** The speaking and listening requirements were kept high in order to reflect the importance of the oral skills for this post, but the writing requirements were lowered as a leisure assistant is not required to write reports, minutes etc.
- 2.3 In 2017 the second part of the project began, which was to record the language skills of staff and ensure that support was available for current members of staff to either maintain the standard of their Welsh language skills or meet the language requirements of their post if a discrepancy existed.
- 2.4 We started by running a pilot with the Gwynedd Consultancy department at the end of 2017. This was partly due to the Department's needs and because of their desire to work with us. One of the most important lessons learned from the pilot is the importance of meeting Heads of Departments and Managers and involving them in the process from the very beginning. In addition, the department and management took ownership of the work, and this was crucial to the success of the project.
- 2.5 A Project Board was set up to monitor the work. As the project calls for looking at jobs (needs assessment and recruitment process), people (appointment and skills assessment) and training, it was decided that the Project Board would include representatives from different services who would contribute to these elements, e.g. the Human Resources service and the Support service.

3 Overview of the project's work

- 3.1 From the end of 2018, the implementation of the project began with the Council's other main departments. This was done by contacting Heads of Department and Managers.
- 3.2 In addition to the Council's main departments, work has also been undertaken to collect language assessments and to develop the language skills of Byw'n lach staff. Although no specific effort has been made to implement the project with the organisations hosted by Cyngor Gwynedd, e.g. North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, North Wales Economic Ambition and GwE, they are able to complete the language self-assessment questionnaire, and support is available to them on request. Work has also taken place to collect language assessments from School staff, which will receive further attention because of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
- 3.3. To facilitate gathering information on staff language skills, the [language self-assessment questionnaire](#) was developed and we started using it from 2019 onwards. The questionnaire asks an individual to score their ability to do a variety of tasks through the medium of Welsh. Based on the answers, the questionnaire provides a language level at the end. It is also an opportunity for staff to note their confidence in the use of Welsh, to identify whether there is anything the Council can do to assist them in using more Welsh in their work, and to give them the opportunity to identify any training needs.

The questionnaire is based on the Council's Self-Service system, and an external version is available for those who do not have access to the Self-Service system.

It is recognised that it is a challenge to ensure that some cohorts of frontline staff complete the language self-assessment questionnaire. To get an idea of their language skills, managers are asked to indicate whether or not the staff members are meeting the language designations of the post.

- 3.4 All forms of support, including in-house refresher courses, external learning courses, intensive courses, on-line courses and apps and websites, are continually offered to staff to improve or maintain their Welsh language skills.
- 3.5 In order to offer after-care to those receiving training, and support speakers who lack confidence or who want to improve their Welsh using methods other than a classroom setting, the **Cynllun Cyfeillion Cymraeg** (Buddy Scheme) was established in March 2019. This Scheme pairs a member of staff who is confident in speaking Welsh with another member of staff who wants to develop their language skills.
- 3.6 Together with staff from the Information Technology service, a system has been developed to retain the information on the language skills of staff. This system gives

the ability to generate various reports e.g. A report of individuals who do not have a language assessment, a report for one service only.

- 3.7 A process has been established to ensure that departments receive consistent information about the language levels of their staff, the number who do not meet the language designations of their posts and the number who have or are attending language training. Heads of Department now receive a report every 3 or 6 months (as requested).
- 3.8 The internal Language Training Hub has been developed as a central space to share information about language training, useful resources and about the project itself, including frequently asked questions and useful information for managers.
- 3.9 A Language Designation Forum has been set up which includes a representative from each of the Council's main departments and Byw'n Iach. The Forum meets every 3 months and offers the opportunity to discuss any challenges that have arisen in relation to the Welsh language, to share good practice and to share information about new opportunities to develop language skills.
- 3.10 Here is the data for the project at the end of the last financial year for the main Council departments (*correct on 31 March 2023 and excluding Schools*):

Total staff from the Council's main departments: **3,861**
 Number of staff who have completed the language self-assessment: **2,725 (71%)**
 Number of staff who have received some form of language assessment: **2,915 (75%)**
 Number of staff remaining without language assessment: **946 (25%)**
 Number of staff reaching the language designations of their posts: **2,668 (92%)**
 Number of staff who do not meet the language designations of their posts: **247 (8%)**
 Number of staff exceeding the language designations of their posts: **1,979 (73%)**

Since the start of the project in 2017 approximately **219** members of staff have attended language training, either to learn Welsh or to develop their skills further.

Of the 247 who do not meet the language designations of their jobs, **35** have received language training to date.

4 Measuring Success

4.1

Measure	In what way?	Succeeded?
review the language designation of each post	all posts will be reviewed, and the Language Designations will be approved	✓
assess the language level of each member of staff at a particular point in time	all members of staff will have received an assessment of their language level, and have received a level equivalent to Cyngor Gwynedd's Language	✓ As much as possible. It will never be possible to reach 100% due to

	Framework	staff turnover, staff access to technology etc.
put in place effective administrative and technical arrangements to retain and update information	an internal site that updates the staff register in line with Council staff turnover and any changes in services. This will allow the project team to know who has and has not received an assessment	✓
reducing the number of gaps between the job designation and the individual's level	offer suitable training to all members of staff who demonstrate that they are below their job designation following an assessment (or following a request from a line manager)	✓ As much as possible. This will continue to be part of day-to-day work beyond the project period.
developing a culture in which departments take ownership of the Language Designations	Managers and Heads of Department as well as individual staff will take responsibility for the Language Designations themselves and take ownership of any developmental needs, contacting the Learning and Organisational Development Service voluntarily as needed	✓ As much as possible. Work continues as new staff, management and heads of department join the Council.
user feedback, from management teams to assessed individuals	oral, written, second-hand feedback (e.g. through a Line Manager or through a contact in a department)	✓

4.2 Acceptance Criteria:

Criterion	Completed?
1. Review the Language Designations of all our posts	✓
2. All staff assessed (data to be taken at a specified date) *	✓
3. Administrative arrangements in place to keep up-to-date information	✓

*For as long as practicable

5 Results

5.1 Review the Language Designations of all our posts:

The language designations of all Council posts were looked at in the first part of the project and completed by the Human Resources service. As the rest of the project progresses, Heads of Department and Managers have been given further opportunities to check the language designations and to make any suitable changes in consultation with the Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer.

A process has also been established with the Support team and the Human Resources team to ensure that the language designations of any job are not changed when re-advertising jobs. In addition, the Council's [Language Policy](#) was updated to

strengthen this element (see point 12.11), to ensure that language designations are considered throughout the advertising and recruitment process (see Section 12 in its entirety) whilst also ensuring that we comply with the Operational Standards.

5.2 **All staff assessed (as far as practicable):**

Due to the Council's high staff turnover, it is almost impossible to reach 100%. We have reached 75% of the staff in the Council's main departments (with 5 out of 10 of the main departments reaching over 90% and 9 out of 10 of the main departments reaching over 60%).

Currently, the only department that is below 60% assessed is the Education department. A specific campaign is underway to gather self-assessments from department staff, which is due to take place before the end of July 2023. This is in line with Outcome 7, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and contributes to the Education Workforce Census. This will also ensure the continuity of the work in the future.

Ensuring frontline, casual and seasonal staff complete the language self-assessment can be a challenge. Because of this, it was decided to gather a simple language assessment from the line manager of these staff members, where appropriate. The manager will identify whether the staff member is reaching the language designations of their post or otherwise, providing us with basic information and contributing to a better idea of the number of staff who are not reaching the language designations of their posts. However, the department and manager should make every effort to ensure that these members of staff also complete the language self-assessment, if possible.

Due to the above information, and what is set out in point 3 below, it was decided that sufficient progress had been made to bring the project to a conclusion.

5.3 **Administrative arrangements in place to keep up-to-date information:**

'Staff language skills' system: Together with the Information Technology service, a system has been developed to retain the information on staff language skills. The 'Staff language skills' system is part of the Staff Development Module and uses information from the Gwynedd Jobs System. This means that any information used about staff and their employment with the Council is as up to date as possible. This system also gives the ability to generate various reports e.g. A report of individuals who do not have a language assessment, a report for one service only. This means that up-to-date information can be provided to anyone who needs it instantly.

PowerBI: In order to see a full overview of the data and view the complete data for departments individually, it was decided to use the PowerBI programme to create dashboards to display the information. The programme combines information from the Gwynedd Job System with the information contained in 'Staff language skills' and

allows it to be presented in a way that is easy to understand and interpret and can be easily updated to display the most up-to-date data.

LimeSurvey and paper questionnaires: Although most Council staff now have access to the Self-Service system, some members of staff do not yet have the necessary information technology skills or confidence to use the system. Because of this, the language self-assessment questionnaire remains available through the LimeSurvey external site and as a paper copy or PDF. Until the LimeSurvey questionnaire can be completely replaced, a procedure has been put in place with the Information Technology service to upload any results from a LimeSurvey or paper questionnaire to the central system once a month (or whenever practicable and suitable).

6 Continuation of the project

Another method of measuring the success of the project is the continuity of the work following the completion of the project. In addition to what is set out above in point 5.3, various processes and resources have been developed to ensure that much of the work will continue.

6.1 Quarterly Reports

A Quarterly Report will continue to be sent to the head of each department and to the department's representative on the Language Designations Forum. The report is a way to update heads of department about the progress in terms of data associated with the project and about staff who attend language training.

6.2 Language Designations Forum

The Language Designations Forum will continue to meet quarterly to discuss anything that arises because of the quarterly report, to give departments the opportunity to identify any challenges and to share good practice. It will also offer an additional opportunity to share information about language training and any other relevant information related to the Welsh language and staff language skills.

6.3 In-house Language Training Hub

The in-house Language Training Hub is fully developed and is regularly updated with information about new courses and resources, providing a dedicated space for staff to find information about language training and further support. There is a specific part of the site that contains information about the work of the Language Designations project, which also contains useful resources for managers to be able to turn to for help.

6.4 Welsh Tip of the Month

The Welsh Tip of the Month will still be released to staff. It has proven to be a success and a way of influencing people beyond the Council as well, due to the collaboration

with Nant Gwrtheyrn. The Tip will be a way of ensuring that staff receive information about grammar and language technology after the project ends.

6.5 Performance Monitoring

Information on staff language skills will be reported by the Learning and Organisational Development service as part of the Corporate Services department's performance monitoring arrangements.

We will be reporting on:

- Number of staff from Main Departments who have received a language assessment
- Number of staff from the Main Departments who have completed the language self-assessment
- The number of staff from the Main Departments who reach their job language designations
- Number of staff from Main Departments who do not reach their job language designations

In addition to the above we will report on any specific successes related to staff language training.

6.6 Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Report on the implementation of the Language Standards

Information on staff's language skills will continue to be reported in the annual report on the implementation of the Language Standards, and we will also continue to provide a supplement on the Welsh Language Training provided to staff.

6.7 Language Training

Due to the work of the project, we now have more detailed and complete data on the language skills of staff and therefore have better information about where we need to focus our efforts in terms of providing language training. We can now focus more of our efforts on ensuring suitable language training for all members of staff who do not meet the language requirements of their jobs, as well as offering developmental opportunities for others to develop their language skills further and at a refresher level.

6.8 Recruitment and Appointment Arrangements

Together with the Language Adviser, the information about the language designations and recruitment and appointment arrangements was added to the Council's Language Policy when the policy was last reviewed and updated (2022). The Policy contains information on setting job language requirements, advertising, re-advertising, appointment and interview.

The information contained in the Language Policy is now comprehensive, clear and easy to follow. The information is contained in the [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#) and in the [Recruitment and Selection Procedure](#) as well.

There has also been collaboration with the Support service and the Human Resource Systems Project Officer to ensure that reference to the above policies and the Cyngor Gwynedd Language Framework is included in the new advertising and appointment module that is being developed as part of the Council's Self-Service system. The aim of this is to ensure that all managers have easy access to information related to the language designations at any stage of the recruitment and appointment process, and that they are aware of the procedure they are expected to follow.

6.9 Gwynedd schools and other organisations

As Gwynedd Schools have their own Language Policy, only the Council's main departments were given the main attention in the implementation of the project. Work is underway to promote the language self-assessment with Gwynedd Schools staff, and it is hoped that it will be possible to work together by providing them with the data in the future.

Similarly, it is hoped that we can continue to influence the organisations hosted by Cyngor Gwynedd, e.g. Byw'n Iach, North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, North Wales Ambition and GwE. A number of these organisations have been in contact for help and support with the Welsh language during the project period. We will continue to welcome opportunities to share knowledge and collaborate in the future to ensure that their staff receive opportunities to develop their language skills.

7 Recommendations

During the implementation phase of the project, a record of risks, lessons learned, and issues raised were retained.

Below, we set out a series of recommendations in response to some of the main points raised. It is hoped that these recommendations can be accepted and acted upon to ensure as little risk as possible to the project's continuation. It is also hoped that they will be a means of further action on what has been learned to expand the influence of the work and ensure success.

7.1 Automatic message to new staff

By using a 'workflow' within the Sharepoint system, it is possible to arrange for a message to be automatically sent to new members of staff asking them to complete the language self-assessment questionnaire. It is hoped to arrange to do this in conjunction with the Learning and Organisational Development service.

This would ensure that all new members of staff who receive an email address are instructed to complete the language self-assessment and help ensure the continuity of the project's work using fewer resources.

7.2 Application for a Welsh tutor through the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme

The Leader and Project Manager have already had a conversation with Siwan Iorwerth from Cymraeg Gwaith to find out more about the scheme and have received confirmation that we would be able to apply.

- There would be no cost to the Council, only the need to secure a commitment from around 60 members of staff to attend courses during the year.
- A tutor would be arranged through the National Centre for Learning Welsh and would be employed by them but based with the Council.
- It would be a way of ensuring continuity to the project's work and reaching more staff who need training, particularly front-line staff who need more flexibility in terms of location and timing.
- It would be a way of addressing the increasing number of staff who are being appointed without reaching the language designations of their post due to recruitment problems in some areas.

7.3 Re-visit the language question which is part of the Council's job application form

Following a discussion at a meeting of the Project Board, it was noted that there was a need to look at simplifying the question to allay any concerns that an applicant for a position with the Council may have, and to make it easier for people to give a clear answer that is a better reflection of their real skills.

The possibility of using the options offered on the TR139 form was discussed when appointing a new member of staff.

7.4 Advanced guidance regarding the Council's stance on the Welsh language

At a meeting of the Project Board, the need for increased guidance was noted regarding the Council's message and approach to addressing the challenges associated with recruitment and appointment, e.g. appointing staff who do not meet the language requirements of the post, supporting learners, simplifying the language of the application form.

Receiving an official message from the Corporate Leadership Team, for example, would be a means of ensuring that staff at all levels, as well as the language officers, are confident in what we transfer to others as a message about the Council's position in relation to the Welsh language when discussing issues such as this.

7.5 Information being given to new managers about the Language Designations

To ensure the continuity of the project and that all staff members who do not meet the language designations of their post are encouraged to undertake language training, it is vital that information about the language designations is passed on to new managers as part of any induction arrangements.

It would be beneficial to work with the Learning and Organisational Development service to organise this.

7.6 Strengthening monitoring arrangements for members of staff attending language training

Monitoring staff members attending language training has been increasingly difficult due to a lack of resources recently. To ensure that staff who do not meet their job language designations continue with their lessons and make suitable progress, establishing a better monitoring system would be of great help.

It would be possible to look at recording language training in the MoDS system, and possibly look at an additional administrative resource.

7.7 Ensuring more opportunities for staff to gain confidence to use their language skills

In order to ensure that staff use the skills they learn in the lessons and provide services to the people of Gwynedd through the medium of Welsh, consideration should be given to creating more opportunities for them to practise their skills and gain confidence in the workplace.

This can be done by:

- Developing the existing Cyfeillion Cymraeg scheme – attract more staff to volunteer and be part of the scheme.
- Develop the internal provision of language training at Gloywi (Refresher) level, e.g. the creation of Clear Welsh training.
- Promote the [ARFer Project](#) (Bangor University) with different suitable teams.
- Promote and organise Confidence Building courses through the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme.
- Ensure that managers encourage staff to use their skills within their services and put arrangements in place to facilitate the use of Welsh for new learners/speakers.

7.8 Continue to monitor and develop the 'Staff Language Skills' system in MoDS

To ensure that the data is accurate and up to date, it is crucial to keep a constant eye on the systems and report any problems to the IT service.

As services and departments see the value of the Language Designations project and the information available, systems/processes may need to be adapted to facilitate how departments receive live information about staff language skills.

This may include:

- Develop the 'Language Training' tab so that data is populated from MoDS.
- Add reminders to staff via Self-Service.
- Ensure that the result of the language self-assessment is placed against the person, not the job.
- Adapt the look of ready-made reports and the information that is included.
- Develop the use of the PowerBI programme.

7.9 Support for managers in running teams that include learners

Teams can very easily switch to speaking in English if there are a few people in the team who are not yet fluent in Welsh.

To support managers in dealing with a situation like this, it would be beneficial to create a guide on holding bilingual meetings and/or setting up brief training. Collaboration with the Language Advisor and Sgiliaith can be explored to develop this.

8 March 2025 Update

8.1 For comparison with the data set out in point 3.10 here is the most recent data for the main Council departments (*correct on 31 March 2025 and excluding Schools*):

Total staff from the Council's main departments: **4,009**

Number of staff who have completed the language self-assessment: **3,383 (84%)**

Number of staff who have received some form of language assessment: **3,693 (92%)**

Number of staff remaining without language assessment: **316 (8%)**

Number of staff reaching the language designations of their posts: **3,340 (90%)**

Number of staff who do not meet the language designations of their posts: **351 (10%)**

Number of staff exceeding the language designations of their posts: **2,322 (63%)**

Since the start of the project in 2017 there has been approximately **289** members of staff who have attended language training, either to learn Welsh or to develop their skills further.

Of the 351 who do not meet the language designations of their jobs, **52** have received language training to date.

8.2 Further developments to the recommendations

7.1 Since July 2023 new staff are automatically sent a message from the Learning and Organisational Development service asking them to complete the language self-assessment questionnaire.

7.2 An application for an in-house language tutor has been submitted to Cymraeg Gwaith and a conversation is now scheduled for the end of March 2025.

7.3 Work is underway to create myth busting videos about the Welsh language in the Council which will address part of the recommendation.

7.4 The work of creating the above 'myth busting' videos will also contribute to addressing this recommendation.

7.5 A 'Language Awareness for Managers' presentation has been created in conjunction with the Language Unit and will be delivered from July 2025 onwards. There is a reference to the session on the Leadership and Management Hub. There is also a reference to information about the language designations and language training as part of the resource to induce new managers, which is being developed by the Learning and Organisational Development service and specific questions about language development are part of the new Continuous Evaluation resources.

7.6 All language training is now recorded on the Staff Development Module, and administrative support is provided by the Talent and Apprenticeship Support Officer. This means that a record of language training will appear on the 'Learning Record' of anyone who has completed a course.

7.7 Staff have been referred to a Confidence Building course which is run through the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme. It is intended to hold Confidence Building sessions like this annually for Council staff through the scheme. In addition, a series of 10 'Developing Language Skills' sessions have been organised for staff to hone their skills and Clear Communication training has been created which will be delivered from May 2025. It is intended to establish a network or more opportunities to bring the Council's new Welsh speakers together.

7.8 The language training information provided on MoDS populates the 'Language Training' record for each individual through the 'Staff Language Skills' system. Work is currently underway with the Research and Information service to develop a Power BI dashboard that will provide department heads with an overview of all language data for their staff. A list of all the improvements that need to be made to 'Staff Language Skills' on MoDS has been created and submitted with the request of the Learning and Organisational Development service for further development work to the MoDS system.

7.9 It is intended to produce a guide to support managers of bilingual teams.

9 What is sought

9.1 Members of the Language Committee are asked to:

- accept the contents of this report.

Report of the Leadership Team and Legal Services on the implementation of the Language Policy and contribution towards the realisation of the Welsh Language Strategy 2023 – 2033

Date	18/04/2025
Department	Leadership Team and Legal Services
Author	Geraint Owen, Corporate Director Iwan G Evans, Head of Legal Service

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.

The Leadership Team and Legal Services collaborate with Council departments to contribute to 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:

- **Promoting the Welsh language** - The Chief Executive has a responsibility for ensuring that our ambition in promoting the use of the Welsh language is pursued across all of the Council's Departments. It is a role that requires him and the Corporate Directors to support departments at times and at other times it requires challenging in a constructive manner.
- **More Than Just Words** - The Statutory Director of Social Services has specific responsibilities in relation to promoting the use of the Welsh language. All County Councils and Health Boards in Wales are expected to appoint a senior leader as the Welsh Language champion as part of the More Than Just Words work programme. That role is held by the Statutory Director in Gwynedd.
 - The Statutory Director has been appointed as a member of the Welsh Government's More Than Just Words Advisory Board for a period of 4 years.
 - The Director is also the chair of the regional More Than Just Words forum from April 2025 onwards.

- Members of the Business Unit (Leadership Team) represent the Council and care services in regional More than Just Words forums, and drive the programme of work within the Council.
- **Proactive Offer** - As part of the work of the More Than Just Words programme it is required, according to the *Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014*, for the champion to ensure the use of the "Proactive Offer", which is to provide a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it, on all occasions.
 - Social Services developed 3 short videos this year explaining the principles of the Proactive Offer to promote its use.
 - The Adult Care and Support Packages Review Form has been modified and questions have been added to allow us to get a picture of how the workforce implements the proactive offer.
- **Public Services Board** - The Chief Executive is a member of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board and has had the opportunity to promote and support a scheme that looks at promoting the use of the Welsh language in the "front doors" of other public organisations in Gwynedd. This is currently one of the Board's main projects and there is an opportunity to ensure that other organisations benefit from Gwynedd's experience and success in this area.
 - The work has now been completed and everything that has been produced is available on the Board's website.
 - The Leadership Team is responsible for the administration of all meetings of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board. These are held through the medium of Welsh (the only one in North Wales). We provide a simultaneous translation service for non-Welsh speaking members.
 - There has recently been a PSB Special Meeting where 5 statutory PSB members co-signed the Active Travel Charter, along with another PSB member (3rd sector). The meeting was held entirely through the medium of Welsh, simultaneous translation was provided and presentations were bilingual.
- **Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)** - The Council has a leading role in several regional partnerships and the Legal Services have played a central role in establishing the governance arrangements of these partnerships, e.g. the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC).
 - There are several dynamics in place regarding ensuring that the arrangements of these bodies operate bilingually; however, the input from the Legal Services means that the arrangements, including the governance documentation etc., are prepared and delivered in both Welsh and English on an equal basis.
 - A Growth Deal transfer agreement to the CJC was recently completed with 11 regional parties, a bilingual document.
 - Gwynedd's ability to deliver technical and specialist issues in Welsh and English means that we are able to provide assurance and confidence in achieving these objectives. This is a principle that is clearly established within our partnership work and is rapidly developing into the norm.

Projects in the Council's plan

The work of the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors provides ongoing challenge and support to Council departments responsible for projects within the Council's Plan. This includes a review of progress being made against those projects as part of discussions at the Departmental Performance Challenge and Support meetings. The language is specifically addressed in the Council's main schemes including the Gwynedd Language Strategy, Digital Transformation Plan, Ffordd Gwynedd Plan, Climate and Nature Plan etc.

- **A Welsh Gwynedd** - 'A Welsh Gwynedd' is a work stream of the Council's Plan. 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 the Council shows how the objectives of our strategy contribute to the 3 main areas of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
- **Digital Plan** - The Council's Digital Transformation Board is chaired by the Corporate Director, and this Board has responsibility for the development and implementation of the new corporate Digital Plan. The Welsh language is at the heart of this Plan, and this will be reflected in the Digital Suitability Assessment which will be a mandatory step before any of the Council's departments procure a digital system or service.
- **Workforce Planning and Talent Development** – The Department's work feeds into the 'Workforce Planning and Talent Development' work stream which is one of the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan work streams. 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.

Other projects and schemes by the Leadership Team and Legal Services

- **Language Forum** - The Corporate Director, together with the Council Leader and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Welsh language, serve on the county Language Forum established by the Language Unit. The Forum meets formally on a quarterly basis. This development, together with the establishment of the new *Menter Iaith* (Language Initiative), will certainly give a further boost to the promotion of the Welsh language in Gwynedd.
- **Project 15** - The Corporate Director is also a member of the Project Group which promotes "Project 15" which is an attempt to increase the material available on social media through the medium of Welsh. Funds have been earmarked to support this work which is being led by officers from the Language Unit.
- **Steering Group** - The Corporate Director, together with the Senior Language and Scrutiny Officer, is a member of a Steering Group established by the Welsh Language Commissioner to develop policy models to increase the use of the Welsh language within public bodies in Wales. The Council's membership of the Group is a consultative one in order to share good practice.
- **Coroner Service** - While the performance of a Coroner Service is a matter in the hands of the function holder, several aspects relate itself to the role of the Legal Service. As the Coroner and Assistant Coroners are appointed by Gwynedd, we have a significant influence on the requirements for these posts. This means that we have been able to ensure that those who are appointed have the ability to carry out their duties through the medium of Welsh and English. This has been recognised by the Ministry of Justice and the Chief Coroner who has an overview of the arrangements.
- **Electoral Services** - The Electoral Services Officer is a member of the Welsh Language Advisory Group of the Wales Electoral Coordination Board. The Group includes representation from local authorities, the Electoral Commission and the Welsh and Westminster Governments.
 - The aim of the Group is to ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in terms of electoral legislation and guidance. It also shares good practice in issues relating to the Welsh language across authorities and ensures that training through the medium of Welsh is available to polling station staff.
 - The Officer is also the Vice-Chair of the Wales Branch of the Association of Electoral Administrators, which provides support, training and guidance to officers across the UK. The Association is currently developing training through the medium of Welsh for polling station staff.

- For several years, the Electoral Unit has been putting pressure on the supplier of our electoral control system to adapt the system to enable the production of bilingual election notices. Previously, we had to prepare the notices ourselves to ensure that they were bilingual. The system is now able to generate notices bilingually and we worked with the company to assist them in creating the Welsh versions of the documents.
- We have also worked with the company to produce bilingual letters to send to constituents to inform them of recent changes in the electoral system e.g. the procedure for requesting postal votes.
- When we create our own election documents we send it to the AEA so that a Welsh version is available to everyone through the resource library on their website. Huw Elfed Roberts, Electoral Services Officer, is a member of the Welsh Language Advisory Group which is a sub-group established by the Electoral Coordination Board.

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.

- **Housing Allocation Policy** – the Leadership Team is in the process of supporting the Housing and Property Department with the Housing Letting Policy in the hope of strengthening the linguistic element in line with the requirement of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities.
- **New Social Care System** – The Leadership Team is supporting the move to a new system that will replace WCCIS – this will attempt to ensure that the new system makes it much easier to record the language of the individuals we serve.
- **Social Services** - It was agreed to sew the Welsh language or Learners logo onto the uniform of the Council's care workforce. This will be implemented in spring 2025.
- **Public Services Board** – The Language Sub-Group is a key part of the work of the Public Services Board and is extremely active. The projects and resources that have already been developed are now available on the website - [Well-being in Gwynedd and Anglesey | Community Projects](#).
 - As part of the work of the Sub-Group, work is currently being carried out on 'myth busting' – we are confident that it will be possible to upload it to the Board's website and that it will be available to any organisation for use, whether public or private.
 - We will be working with members of the PSB, but also on a wider level – partners such as Careers Wales; *Arfor/Mentera*/Welsh Language Initiatives and *Darogan Talent* (Wales' Graduate Hub) Programme/Officers etc.
 - PSB members are very keen to continue to support new speakers, recruit and retain Welsh language staff and see the new resource we will be developing as something useful to share and use within the organisations – co-sharing. With the Recruitment resource (2nd project), we collaborated with Efa, the Welsh Language Commissioner as they were one of the stakeholders and contributed to the work.
 - Collaborating with the Future Generations Commissioner; Other Public Service Boards and Welsh Government to share and promote projects that have already been completed.

- **Proactive Offer** - An initial Assessment Form for adults will be modified and language questions will also be addressed as part of this to allow us to get a picture of how the workforce is implementing the proactive offer

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?

Over the past year, the Leadership Team and Legal Services have seen an increase in the development of technology and the Welsh language. These examples are referred to below:

- **Artificial Intelligence** – Many services across Council departments have seen a significant increase in the use of Artificial Intelligence or AI over the past year. We anticipate that this will become one of the Council's top priorities over the coming year and the Department's work will be key to ensuring that we as a Council are ahead of the curve with the development of this technology and take advantage of the opportunities it offers while at the same time ensuring advice on the risks and appropriate use.
- **Phone System** - Corporate Director supporting the Information Technology (IT) service with a move to a new phone system that will connect with Microsoft Teams provision and improve the quality of the information we identify from the system. The service has broken new ground by collaborating with global company CISCO / Webex to ensure that the provision is available for the first time in Welsh. It is hoped that a number of other organisations will be able to take advantage of this provision in the future.
- **Social Services System** - A Statutory Director and the Business Unit have been supporting the initiation of the decommissioning of our social services system/database (WCCIS), and the commissioning of a new system from the private market. All counties in North Wales (and most counties in Wales) have commissioned the same system across Adult and Children's services, and the Service is leading on ensuring that the system meets our linguistic needs in Gwynedd, but this will have an impact on the rest of the counties in Wales that will also use the system.
- Continue to promote technology options in care that are available in Welsh, and collaborate with companies developing new technology in the field to try and ensure that the latest technology is available in Welsh.
- The latest technology is being developed in English, and the AI 'voice recognition' technology, for example, is not currently effective in Welsh. The WLGA and the Government are trying to drive this agenda forward and the department is trying to highlight that not enough pressure is being put on companies to develop the Welsh element, and there is a risk that the technology is being developed and that we are unable to keep up.
- **Legal** - There is room to reflect on the service and language resources within the Legal Service such as technical documents that we have created. This can be a resource to be shared externally under appropriate conditions if resources allow. Similarly, there are additional opportunities to use case management technology to its full potential and to support provision through the Welsh language.

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, 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 the 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 *menter iaith* for different groups
2. Number of community 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

Not relevant to the nature of the service (i.e. supporting other departments within the Council).

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

The Department has increased in numbers this year following the transfer of the Business Unit from the Adults Department on 1 April 2024.

95.6% of staff in the Leadership Team and Legal Services have completed a language self-assessment (108 members of staff).

There are 7 members of staff who have not submitted a language self-assessment at this time. 2 of those have received a language assessment from a line manager, meaning that 5 have no language assessment at all.

Of the 108 who have completed a self-assessment, 5 did not meet the language needs of the post.

Staff were transferred into the Council on last year's TUPE arrangement, including some of the members who did not meet language needs but there are efforts to learn the language through lessons and efforts as part of the *Cyfeillion Cymraeg* Scheme to support their development.

Over the last year, 1 person within the Department has undertaken a Language Improvement course with Learning Welsh North West through the *Cymraeg Gwaith* scheme.

Further observations:

Legal - There are a total of 22.25 FTE Jobs employees – 25 individuals in the Legal Services. All of the employed staff are able to fulfil all the requirements of the posts through the medium of Welsh. There are currently 3 non-Welsh speaking locums (equivalent to 1.5 posts) supporting either the work of the Legal Team or mainly regional legal work.

Social Services -

Social Services have been working to ensure accurate information on the linguistic ability of the workforce. That information is now available for 90% of the social services workforce. This is a significant improvement from a year and a half ago where the figure was around 65%.

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

BARRIERS

- **English-only Correspondence** - The nature of the positions of the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors means that they regularly participate in multi-agency meetings, at a regional and national level. It is unfortunate that some organisations, including the Welsh Government, continue to hold such meetings through the medium of English far too often. The Department also sees a number of documents, e.g. grants arriving that are English-only. It is vitally important therefore, as representatives of Cyngor Gwynedd, that we insist on the right to contribute through the Welsh language at every opportunity.
- **Relationship with the Health Board** – We must collaborate with external organisations that do not operate internally mainly through the medium of Welsh. E.g., the Statutory Director (Social Services) works closely with the Health Board and makes every effort to ensure that meetings are held in Welsh. There is a tendency by the Health Board to switch to English if anyone at the meeting fails to understand Welsh, rather than securing an interpreter in advance. The vast majority of meetings are now held in Welsh. Recent work has been done to try to co-locate where it is possible to strengthen working relationships (e.g. between Social Workers and Community Nurses) but there is a natural challenge if a proportion of their staff are non-Welsh speakers and the office language becomes English. Attention will be given to ensure that this does not happen as the work progresses.
- The Chief Executive and Corporate Directors take advantage of their influence as Welsh speakers to encourage the use of Welsh at meetings and workshops, contributing in Welsh on all occasions and ensuring that Welsh language provision is available at all times.
- **Legal Services** –
 - From time to time, the Legal Services commission the use of locum workers and external lawyers to meet requirements for specific capacity or expertise. It must be recognised that it is a challenge to ensure such provision through the medium of Welsh. However, on all occasions where this is possible we will prioritise the use of individuals who are able to work through the medium of Welsh.
 - The other aspect is the need to employ high-level specialist lawyers who have the ability to provide a service through the medium of Welsh. Where possible, we

instruct solicitors and barristers who have the language skills. On some occasions, it is possible to secure a service at the highest level to give advice or opinions through the medium of Welsh. However, on issues that either require a wider team, specific expertise or the size of a project, securing the provision through the medium of Welsh is difficult, if not impractical. The ability to deliver through the medium of Welsh is set out in national framework agreements but, this is not a general provision across the companies. This is widely reflected even within companies that have their roots in Wales. It should be noted that the ability to offer a service through the Welsh language is a factor that is reflected more and more in local companies and it is certainly developing. This allows the Council to instruct and receive legal advice through the medium of Welsh.

- It can be considered in the medium term to move to a position where all the services provided to Gwynedd and regionally can be delivered through the medium of Welsh. It is an employment situation specifically in the legal field that has improved in terms of attracting and retaining staff in a sustainable manner. We are building on this and are confident that development can continue. This includes taking advantage of *Cynllun Yfory* to develop staff in-house either through professional trainees or apprenticeships. There are specific and specialist requirements around our regional work that set short-term requirements that must be met and require a special type of expertise. However, the Legal Service has also strived to reduce the externalisation of work. Generally, they succeeded in doing so. When recruitment was needed, we have been successful in attracting lawyers who are fluent in Welsh. We continue to move in this direction across all aspects of the work. As we are about to establish a long-term SLA with the CJC this will create an opportunity to recruit on a more stable basis.
- It is important to recognise that the Gwynedd Legal Service is almost unique among the 22 Authorities, having a team where all officers could provide a complete service through the medium of Welsh. This continues and the matters identified have not changed the culture or nature of the Service.

The Department continues to support the Council's efforts to promote language courses in the workplace – e.g. the 'Using' *Cymraeg Gwaith* course at Nant Gwrtheyrn (April-June 2025). They are special opportunities that are fully funded.

Officers within the department have been involved in the *Cyfeillion Cymraeg* Scheme and have seen great benefit from both sides of being part of these opportunities.

As a Leadership Team, we will continue to promote and take advantage of every opportunity that arises to ensure that the Welsh language is given a prominent place, not only in the work of the Council but also at a community level within the County, regionally and nationally.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024: [Leadership Team and Legal Services.pdf](#)