



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.00 am, MONDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2026

Location

Virtual Meeting

For public access to the meeting, please contact us

Contact Point

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LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (10)

Councillors

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

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

Independent (5)

Councillors

Wendy Cleaver
Gwilym Jones
Hefin Underwood

Beth Lawton
Anne Lloyd-Jones

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

Other Invited Member

Councillor Llio Elenid Owen, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Legal and the Welsh Language

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest

3. URGENT BUSINESS

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

4. MINUTES

4 - 12

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 09 April 2026 be signed as a true record.

5. REPORT BY THE ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT ON THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS REALISING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2023-2033

13 - 25

To consider the report.

6. 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

26 - 29

To consider the report.

LANGUAGE COMMITTEE 9 FEBRUARY 2026

PRESENT:

Councillors: Menna Baines (Chair)

Anne Lloyd Jones, Jina Gwyrfai, Gwilym Jones, Beth Lawton, Elfed Williams, Beca Brown, Rhys Tudur, Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn and Cai Larsen.

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).

Others invited: Councillor Llio Elenid Owen (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services and the Welsh Language).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Item 5: Siwan Llwyd Roberts (Head of Gwynedd Immersion Education System) and Debbie Anne Jones (Assistant Head - Education Services).

Item 6: Carys Fôn Williams (Head of Housing and Property Department) and Siôn Elwyn Hughes (Senior Operational Officer, Housing and Property Department).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Meryl Roberts (Vice-chair), Alan Jones-Evans, Hefin Underwood and Gwynfor Owen.

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 13 October 2025, 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 submitted by the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System and the Assistant Head of Education Services. They referred briefly to the following main points:

It was explained that this report was a summary of the Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) that had been submitted to Welsh Government in July 2025, with further updates.

Attention was drawn to the Gwynedd Education Language Policy, confirming that the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 placed a statutory duty on the Government, Local Authorities and schools to plan to increase the Welsh-medium education provision. It was explained that the act did not come fully into force until around 2030. It was noted that the intention of the Education Department and the Council was to be proactive to ensure that the requirements of the legislation were met.

It was explained that a public consultation was being undertaken on a draft of the Gwynedd Education Language Policy, following a comprehensive consultation by Meirion Prys Jones during 2024/25. It was detailed that engagement sessions had been carried out with school Headteachers, pupils, parents, language forums, language organisations, representatives of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and representatives from the Welsh Language Commissioner, to steer the Policy development. It was confirmed that a draft of that Policy had been submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2025. It was noted that this draft Policy had been approved as an exemplar Policy and the public consultation was applauded. Attention was drawn to the fact that the period of public consultation had commenced since January 2026, and it was noted that it would conclude on 25 February 2026. Furthermore, it was noted that a further report would be submitted to the Cabinet to present feedback from the public consultation and ask for a decision on whether the new-look Gwynedd Education Language Policy should be adopted before it was shared to Governing Bodies, before September 2026.

Pride was expressed that approximately 99% of primary school teachers and approximately 89% of secondary school teachers felt confident to teach through the medium of Welsh. However, it was noted that the Council had been collaborating with Learn Welsh North West to ensure that staff at transitional schools (Ysgol Friars - Bangor, Our Lady's School - Bangor, and Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn), received additional support to assist teachers to feel confident to teach through the medium of Welsh by receiving support from a tutor, once a fortnight. Pride was expressed that 17 staff and pupils from Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn had already taken advantage of this provision, confirming that work was being done to establish the post of Welsh Language Tutor for the site in future.

It was reported that work was being done to look at the social use of Welsh amongst young people. It was noted that the Council received a Welsh Language Grant every year from the Government and that it was used to promote Welsh-medium activities beyond the classroom and outside school hours. The work of the Youth Service was elaborated upon, emphasising that it was key in this area. Attention was drawn to events that were taking place in collaboration with the Language Charter and Welsh Language Grant. It was noted that focus was being placed on practical and social events such as parades, transition sessions and gigs. It was explained that locations such as Pontio and Nant Gwrtheyrn were used to facilitate the activities. Pride was expressed that there was much more interest in the Book Contest than had been seen over recent years. It was elaborated that teams from schools across Gwynedd were participating in it this year.

It was confirmed that the Department was collaborating with other entities such as Menter Iaith Gwynedd to ensure that projects such as the 'Language Heroes' continued. It was noted that it was being held at Ysgol Abererch and Ysgol Ffridd y Llyn this year.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the Department was also working with theatre companies such as Arad Goch, who were preparing performances of 'Natur' by Morgan Elwy in the coming weeks. It was also noted that the Department continued to work with Cwmni'r Frân Wen.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:

The Department was thanked for their work at Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn, noting that difficulties had been experienced to appoint teachers who were able to speak Welsh. It was explained that only around 4% of the pupils came from Welsh-speaking homes, but the community was positive about what was going on at the school. In response, the Head of the Immersion Education System gave thanks and said that it was encouraging to see the confidence of the teachers and pupils growing and noted that this was the main need; it was not learning the language from scratch. It was also noted that there was a good relationship with the Immersion Centre in the area.

Attention was drawn to the Gwynedd Yfory project, which extended play and socialising opportunities for children and young people in Gwynedd, and it was suggested whether it should be considered that more than one Youth Officer needed to be appointed. It was also noted that there were gaps in the provision in the Llŷn and south Meirionnydd areas, emphasising the need to ensure that the provision was in the County's rural areas, and not just in the areas with the highest population density. In response to the observations, the Head of Immersion Education System confirmed that there was an intention to expand this service's staffing structure. It was explained that it was hoped that this would be done by assessing the number of contributions and using this as evidence to submit to the Welsh Government to highlight the need for further investment in Gwynedd. It was noted that £20,000 was provided by the Welsh Government annually for this provision and it was hoped that this would increase in the future to attract new Welsh speakers and nurture what already existed in Gwynedd's Welsh communities. In response to a further enquiry, it was confirmed that 21,305 participations were associated with the project's activities over the last year, confirming that this figure included individuals who had attended more than one event. Furthermore, the Assistant Head of Education Services emphasised that this report was a partial picture of the services available, as it detailed the work of the Education Department. Attention was drawn to third sector organisations that provided valuable opportunities for children and young people such as Urdd Gobaith Cymru and Wales Young Farmers Clubs.

In response to an enquiry about how to measure the success of provisions which ensured that the Welsh language was used socially, the Head of the Gwynedd Immersion System confirmed that several forums shared young people's views about the Welsh language. Attention was drawn to the Youth Forum, which discussed the views and aspirations of young people and the Gwynedd Language Forum Young People Sub-group. Furthermore, it was confirmed that there was an expectation for the Council to report on the views of young people on the social use of Welsh within the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. It was also noted that pupils completed a self-assessment within the schools which noted social use of the language, such as when using social media or listening to music. It was acknowledged that the Department could not contact the pupils' homes to ask them about the use of Welsh there without the schools' support. The Assistant Head of Education Services elaborated that modifying social customs was not a task that could be achieved in the short-term, and she welcomed any resource received to address the issue. The concept of conducting research occasionally to measure the success of these efforts was considered.

It was noted that 11% of Gwynedd secondary school teachers did not feel confident to teach through the medium of Welsh. It was reiterated that this figure was a high proportion of the County's secondary teachers, and it was asked whether these teachers worked in the transitional schools or across the county. Pride was expressed that several support sources were available for the teachers to feel confident to teach in Welsh, asking whether it was possible to measure their attainment with this provision as their confidence increased. In response to the observations, the Head of the Immersion Education System noted that it was not possible to confirm which schools the teachers in question came from, but the information would be circulated to Members when it was timely to do so. The type of courses being held to boost confidence with Welsh were detailed and that they were being offered in cooperation with Canolfan Bedwyr and Learn Welsh North West, and they responded to the individual needs and specific situations within the Transitional Schools. It was noted that future reports

would include details on the development of this provision and definitive data on the development of teacher confidence to teach through the medium of Welsh.

In response to the enquiries and investigations being carried out on the social use of Welsh, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor noted that the WISERD Language Network had recently been re-established by Welsh Universities. It was confirmed that the Universities were eager to collaborate with Local Authorities to provide input on the type of information they wanted to be collected and that there was contact with policy practitioners in local authorities.

In response, to see whether there was an intention to establish more Urdd community aelwydydd as a result of the news that the Urdd Eisteddfod would be coming to Eryri in 2028, the Assistant Head of Education Services confirmed that 5 community aelwydydd were currently operational. It was acknowledged that increasing this number was a substantial challenge due to the requirement for volunteers to sustain them. However, it was noted that it was not possible to elaborate on the proposal to extend the number of community aelwydydd, or the number attending them, as it was a provision that was supported by the Urdd.

The intention of the Council and Education Department to be proactive to comply with the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, was supported. Attention was drawn to the fact that the Department had plans to extend the Welsh language amongst native speakers, and details of those plans were sought. In response, the Head of the Education Immersion System confirmed that the Department was collaborating with Agored Cymru, which gave older children access to practical experiences in their communities, through the medium of Welsh. It was explained that this plan gave them the opportunity to speak Welsh naturally and socially with a Welsh workforce. It was noted that Agored Cymru was holding sessions that ran in parallel with practical GCSE courses, boosting confidence in the language and ensuring that it was spoken in the workplace. Reference was also made to an exciting plan in collaboration with the Adnodd company, who were looking to ensure language strength, access to comprehensible and quality standards, whilst also being ambitious when considering future possibilities.

A reminder was given that officers had reported that staffing levels within the educational psychology service were concerning in 2025, and it was asked whether the situation continued to be challenging. In response, the Head of the Immersion Education System confirmed that unfortunately this concern remained. However, it was noted that trainee psychologists had been appointed, in the hope that these concerns would be mitigated in the near future, once they qualified as registered psychologists. It was emphasised that this was a national concern, and the Welsh Government was aware of the gap in this provision. The hope was that more educational psychologists would be trained with support from Bangor University, as the qualification would be offered there, instead of at Cardiff University only.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.

6. 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.

The report was presented by the Head of Housing and Property Department and the Senior Executive Officer. They referred briefly to the following main points:

It was reported that over 11,300 local individuals had received help and support in various ways as a result of the Department's Housing Action Plan. It was noted that this support included grants, Council tax exemptions to renovate empty houses, loans through the Homebuy Scheme, supported accommodation via homelessness schemes or grants to make adaptations to the houses of disabled individuals, so that they could continue to live at home independently.

Attention was drawn to the Empty Homes Scheme, which addressed bringing homes back into use by supporting owners to bring houses to an acceptable living standard whilst also keeping residents in their communities. It was noted that 128 grants had been given to buyers with a local connection to the houses, emphasising that the total number of houses coming back into use was 321. It was emphasised that several people taking advantage of this scheme were local first-time buyers, and the Scheme allowed them to stay in their communities.

It was explained that an impact assessment on equality characteristics, the Welsh language and the Socio-Economic duty was being completed on the Housing Action Plan. Pride was expressed as the Plan was having a positive impact on every equality characteristic and the Welsh language as it increased the number and range of houses within the County for the needs of various communities. It was elaborated that the Plan was having a positive impact on the Welsh language as it helped a high percentage of Gwynedd residents, who had been priced out of the housing market, to have access to affordable homes, loans, grants or tax relief. It was reported that the data gathered by estate agents confirm that an average of 95% of new social housing estate residents can speak Welsh. It was elaborated that these estates include 26% more Welsh speakers than the electoral ward where it is located, and 31% higher than the percentage of Welsh speakers in the County.

Reference was made to plans which addressed the increase of housing supply for local people and to assist individuals to deal with the cost-of-energy crisis and fuel poverty.

Looking ahead to the 2026/27 financial year, it was noted that the Department wished to update the Welsh language impact assessment in the Common Housing Allocation Policy, as a result of new legislation that comes into force in the Homelessness field, in line with the Welsh Government's timeframe to publish that legislation. It was also explained that the department intended to take every opportunity to assist the local people of Gwynedd to access affordable homes and continue to receive data on the linguistic ability of new tenants on social housing estates.

Pride was expressed that the new on-line portal was being completed by an external company to give individuals access to application forms for social housing or updates on live applications, on-line, for the first time ever. It was emphasised that this portal was convenient for anyone who wished to fill-in an on-line form or needed information outside normal working hours. It was emphasised that discussions were being held regularly with the company to ensure that this portal was available completely bilingually. It was noted that paper and phone processes continued to be available to anyone who did not have access or was uncomfortable to complete on-line forms.

An update was provided that the Department had procured a new system in November 2025 to extract data on individuals' language choice, for the purpose of being able to contact people. It was explained that this data could not be extracted from the previous system. Details were provided that 855 Housing Options applicants had asked the Department to correspond in Welsh, and 805 had asked for English correspondence. Similarly, it was noted that 95 individuals who had contacted the Homelessness unit had asked for correspondence through the medium of Welsh, 254 in English and 2 in another language. It was emphasised that any initial correspondence was sent bilingually, with the Welsh language first, in an attempt to encourage and promote the use of the language when possible. It was ensured

that this was also the case about information that was shared on social media and all other forms of correspondence used by the Department.

It was reported that 95.8% of Department staff had received a language self-assessment or an assessment from their line manager, up to December 2025. It was confirmed that 95.6% of these reached the Language Designations of their jobs.

It was mentioned that the Department had received acknowledgement and praise from the Language Commissioner's Office in relation to the Housing Allocation Policy. It was explained that the Commissioner was glad to see that the Policy placed strong emphasis on local connection at Gwynedd level and community level, as it was a way of assisting to strengthen the Welsh language, with evidence to support that. Pride was expressed that the Department's Housing Allocation Policy was considered as good practice for other authorities to emulate, confirming that the Commissioner was preparing a blog that would be published on their website soon to detail the issue.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:

In response to an enquiry about guidelines to be followed to fill empty social housing after their owners left, the Head of Housing and Property Department confirmed that this was the responsibility of the housing associations and that it did not fall under the Department's function.

The Department was congratulated on the work they did to ensure that local residents had local homes. However, it was noted that around a third of Gwynedd communities could not speak Welsh and therefore a local individual did not necessarily mean that it was an individual with Welsh language skills. It was asked why the Department did not ask individuals whether they were able to speak Welsh as a part of the implementation of the Housing Action Plan. In response, the Head of Department explained that the Department had to adhere to the statutory housing allocation rules. It was reiterated that the questions being asked by the Department had to be specific for the housing need, emphasising that the language did not affect your housing needs and therefore applicants could not be asked that question. However, it was confirmed that housing associations could ask about individuals' linguistic skills as the house had already been let by then and no response provided by the individuals would affect tenants.

A request was made that housing associations provided more details in their data to confirm how many adults in their houses were able to speak Welsh, as well as how many children who were able to speak Welsh, to obtain a full picture.

In response to a request for an update of the legal advice the Department received as guidance to include a linguistic condition as a part of the process of allocating social housing, the Head of Housing and Property Department noted that the Cabinet Member had already provided an update at a Cabinet meeting. It was noted that the link to watch that discussion would be shared with Members.

In response to an enquiry on how the Department adapted the Welsh language equality impact assessment, the Head of Department reported that a public assessment was being done in collaboration with the Department's partners, following advice from the Welsh Language Commissioner to do so. It was emphasised that this assessment was a full assessment of the Housing Allocation Policy that would be completed whilst the amendments were made to the policy. It was confirmed that Members would have an opportunity to submit their views and comments as a part of the consultation on that policy. In response to a further enquiry, it was believed that the Housing Allocation Policy protected the Welsh language and that there was a need to ensure that any changes to it complied with all legislation, whilst also being firm and positive when protecting the Welsh language.

The plans in the pipeline to bring empty houses back into use were detailed, and the Department was asked whether they were of the opinion that approving 128 was equivalent to the need, was more than what was expected, or whether they expected the demand for this plan to be higher. It was also asked whether they had received any feedback from the individuals who had benefited from the plan. Reference was made to changes to the plan, which enabled all types of house buyers to benefit from it, asking whether a high proportion of the grants had been approved to landlords. In response to the considerations, the Head of Department confirmed that no complaints had come to hand for this plan, and anyone who wished to provide feedback was encouraged to do so. It was noted that a financial bid had been submitted by the Department to fund the jobs of additional empty homes officers because an increase had been seen in the number of applications. Similarly, it was explained that an additional 3 officers had been appointed to assist with enforcement matters which related to empty houses which caused difficulties within communities, explaining that one of the empty homes officers collaborated with the enforcement officers to bridge the provision. It was reported that only the people who went to live in the houses after they were brought back into use were eligible for this plan, confirming that landlords were not eligible as a result. It was also mentioned that the Department had asked for a proportion of the increase seen in council tax had been earmarked to a new plan that would bring empty houses back into use to help with the homelessness situation within the county.

In response to an enquiry, the Head of Department confirmed that all correspondence was in line with the Council's Language Policy. It was reported that the first correspondence was sent bilingually, with all other further correspondence sent in the individual's chosen language, except for any statutory correspondence. It was confirmed that the Department did not ask individuals again about their chosen language for correspondence after the first time, in line with the implementation of the Language Policy.

Attention was drawn to the fact that a vast number of homeless individuals wished to receive correspondence in English, and it was asked whether this was because many of these individuals derived from areas outside the county. In response, the Head of Department reported that there was no link between the correspondence figures and where the homeless individuals derived from. It was noted that the majority of homeless people in the county derived from Gwynedd, with a small percentage having come to the county to escape from domestic abuse, and there was a statutory duty on the Department to look after them.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.

7. 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 Democracy and Language Service Manager in the absence of the Head of Department. They referred briefly to the following main points:

A reminder was given that the Department contributed to the work of developing policies, strategies and projects which promoted the use of Welsh in work areas, services, communities and workforce development as a part of the Welsh Language Strategy 2023-2033.

It was noted that the department had integrated the Welsh language into key policies and continued to do so. It was confirmed that emphasis was placed on ensuring that services for

the public and staff were available bilingually, with Welsh prioritised in phone systems, websites, social media, training and internal communications. It was elaborated that research provided evidence to steer decisions, and that specific projects promoted the use of Welsh amongst young people, businesses and communities.

Pride was expressed that the workforce's language skills was a priority for the Department, noting that there were training plans, support for apprentices and projects to teach Welsh to the workforce, with further support provided to those individuals who worked within the care field. It was confirmed that enterprises were in place which focused on increasing staff confidence in using the Welsh language. Attention was drawn to the fact that the report evidenced the high language skill levels of the Corporate Support Department.

It was acknowledged that the Department faced challenges and barriers when providing and promoting Welsh-medium services. Reference was made to some specific challenges such as the lack of a Welsh-medium provision by some key partners such as the police and the WLGA, national procurement and tendering systems which did not support the Welsh language adequately and social media technology. Specific attention was drawn to a barrier within the field of birth and death registration, noting that legislative restrictions restricted the ability to be able to complete a registration in Welsh only.

It was noted that the Department intended within the next year, to develop a guide to assess the impact on the Welsh language so that staff use it on major projects. It was also noted that other plans included Welsh Technology training promotion and raising staff awareness of the offer available to assist them. It was emphasised that the work in the language training field continued and that the Department also continued to collaborate with the General Registration Office to improve the Welsh provision offered.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:

Attention was drawn to the fact that Galw Gwynedd systems ask service users whether they want to continue to use Welsh services on many occasions, although the user had already noted their language of choice. In response to the enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor noted that the Officers were not aware that this question was being asked, and she confirmed that they would hold discussions with the service to ensure that this will not happen in the future.

In response to an enquiry about whether customer mobility assessments for receiving Blue Badges was completed in Welsh until the customer asks for an English assessment, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that the Welsh language was used first, until the customers noted that their language of choice was English.

In response to an enquiry, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser confirmed that the Office for National Statistics now continued with the census and confirmed that another census was in the pipeline. It was noted that this census was in a consultation period at present. It was confirmed that the Council had provided input to that consultation, asking the Office for National Statistics to ensure that more questions relating to the Welsh language were being asked.

Reference was made to the 'language use survey pilot' which showed that 71.8% of the sample observed chose Welsh-medium services when using some of the Council's front-line services. In response to a question about whether there were plans in the pipeline to expand this pilot, the Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that it was hoped that this would happen. It was also reiterated that new interventions were operational as a result of the survey, such as the development of simple posters, with a spoken feel, to encourage people to use their Welsh language skills. It was noted that work was progressing in an attempt to simplify the language being used, such as in forms on the Council's website to promote the

use of Welsh. Attention was drawn to the fact that the number of people who used the Welsh language in leisure centres and libraries was higher than users at the Galw Gwynedd call centre, and therefore, further research would be carried out to address this. It was emphasised that there was a need to ensure that attention was given to digital aspects of this work, as more Council services were becoming digital over time. Pride was expressed that this survey evidenced that Council staff were proactive with the Welsh language. The Democracy and Language Service Manager elaborated that the long-term Clear Communication project addressed some of these matters, as it looked at Council services to see whether they could be adapted to communicate effectively and clearly without degrading the language or services.

Concern was expressed that challenges remained with the General Registration Office to improve the Welsh provision. A request was made to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Legal and Welsh Language to correspond with the Office on behalf of the Committee, to express this discontent and ask them to put steps in place for this in the future by adding a Welsh-medium provision.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

RESOLVED

- **To accept the report, noting the observations received during the discussion.**
- **To request that the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Legal Services and the Welsh Language corresponds with the General Registration Office on behalf of the Committee, to express discontent that it is not possible to register in Welsh and ask them to put steps in place to change this.**

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

CHAIR

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	20 April 2026
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, the community or research and technology)

Relevant policies and strategic plans

All of the Department's policies and strategic plans contribute to the objectives of the language strategy. Specifically:

- [Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy](#) - The Welsh language is rooted within the Strategy, the vision of the Strategy is "An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being."
- [Ardal Ni Our Area Local Regeneration Framework](#)- incorporates 13 local area regeneration plans which highlights key issues and priorities identified locally
- [Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan](#) - The Welsh language is a core part of the vision for a sustainable visitor economy and one of the agreed principles for implementation.
- Draft Gwynedd Culture Plan. The draft culture vision and principles for Gwynedd address celebrating our identity, heritage and the Welsh language.
- [Welsh Slate Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan](#) - Emphasis is placed within the Management Plan on the importance of the language and culture within our slate communities and the need to protect and promote the language across our activities.

Projects in the Council Plan

A Prosperous Gwynedd:

- **Promoting our culture and a sustainable visitor economy**
- **Regenerating communities and town centres**
- **Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work**

A Caring Gwynedd:

- **Supporting People's Well-being**

Projects and schemes by the Department's Services:

The Department's projects and plans are constantly monitored with arrangements in place to carry out an equality impact assessment, including the impact of the Welsh Language, when introducing a new policy or plan. The matters that services have highlighted for 2025/26 are matters that have been previously reported to this Committee, but managers

are constantly challenging to ensure that they contribute to the objectives of the language strategy. Some projects and schemes by different services are set out below:

Maritime Service: All our on-line services are available bilingually e.g. powerboat registration applications, berth applications and seasonal parking tickets, as well as any material provided to customers or coastal users e.g. safety leaflets, code of conduct etc.

Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour Service: All our on-line services are available bilingually as well as any material provided to customers and harbour users. Although many of our service users use English, efforts are made to start all conversations in Welsh. All services are available in Welsh and English including our website: [Hafan | Hafan Pwllheli Marina](#)

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). We continue to work with Menter Iaith Bangor to hold sessions to encourage conversations between Welsh speakers and new Welsh speakers. In addition, the Engagement and Learning Officer (SPF/Fusion grant) works with Menter Iaith throughout the county to provide links and activities by supporting the Welsh language e.g. Tywyn.

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 various grants such as Community Arts and Arts Support Grants 2025/6 support has been provided to Gwynedd's cultural organisations and companies, reaching all parts of the county and offering Welsh and bilingual provision. It is hoped that this will continue in 2026/7. Recipients of an arts grant are required to accept the Council's language policy or have one themselves and indicate the number of opportunities available in Welsh.

Also, in the process of developing the vision of Culture for Gwynedd and conferences and workshops held with the Welsh language as part of it.

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 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. The Service also collaborates with other organisations, such as the National Library, Open Doors, Historical Societies etc. to carry out activities.

Gwynedd Libraries Service 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 are working with key partners to ensure that Welsh language resources are available to support all types of reading and information needs, and to support the needs of users who need access to books and other materials in Welsh in different forms. 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 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.

Regeneration Programmes Service: The information we have on-line is bilingual and all marketing/promotional material is bilingual.

The Service is responsible for the regeneration role within our town centres which involves a number of commissions. Commissioning packages for any work are bilingual and any scheme developed, whether it is a study or capital work such as signage, will all be bilingual. In addition, any scheme of an arts nature that is implemented will take into account and benefit from the celebration of heritage and language. Examples include art schemes in town centres along with slate inlays on town pavements that are part of the story of Welsh Slate. More recently there has been support for towns interested in submitting an expression of interest to the UK Government to be a Town of Culture 2029.

The Service is also responsible for co-ordinating the work and implementation of projects relating to the North West Wales Slate Landscape. It is a specific area of work where the Welsh language is a horizontal theme within the Management Plan and is addressed 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 our basic principles for promoting the Welsh language in the community:

- Use of Clear Welsh in correspondence and advertisements for activities
- Start every conversation: whether it's a meeting, event or activity, in Welsh
- Ensure equal status for Welsh and English
- Create a supportive space and opportunities for learners to practise their Welsh
- Lead well-being events and historic walks naturally bilingual, giving learners opportunities to practise Welsh, and opportunities for people who do not speak Welsh at all, to hear it and to become familiar with it.

Specific projects currently underway:

- 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 share them with fluent Welsh speakers and new speakers

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. We are currently working with Menter Iaith Gwynedd to establish a referral system for community groups that receive support to develop projects that cannot be delivered bilingually. This will ensure that these groups have specialist support to ensure bilingualism in their arrangements and provision.

Economic Development Service: The work of the Service includes responsibility for the development and implementation of the Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy and the '*Creating the best possible conditions in Gwynedd for businesses and community enterprises to thrive, and supporting the people of Gwynedd into work*' project within the Council's Plan. Work to develop a new economic strategy for Gwynedd has been completed during 2025/26. The Strategy received the seal of approval of [Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on 10 March](#) and a recommendation for its adoption will be submitted to the Full Council on 14 May.

Ensuring a prosperous future for the language within our communities is at the core of the intention of the Economic Strategy. An assessment was carried out early in the development process of the Strategy to embed linguistic considerations into its development; as a result the strengthening of the Welsh language is included in the vision of the Strategy:

"An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being."

The Welsh language has also been identified within the sixth priority of the strategy and strengthening the use and visibility of the Welsh language as a unique aspect of Gwynedd's economy has been identified as an area of activity.

The use of the Welsh language by initiatives is also woven within the monitoring and evaluation framework of the Strategy. A large part of the Service's activity then falls under the wing of our project within the Council's 'A Prosperous Gwynedd' priority.

The **ARFOR programme** has been operating since 2019, 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.

A further £500,000 has been secured by the Welsh Government to continue the ARFOR Programme until September 2026. The transition period focuses on the recommendations of the independent evaluations of ARFOR 1 and 2; transfer learning from the programme and implement a small number of key interventions within the youth and migration themes. During 2025/26, the Service has secured £1.3 million to offer financial support to help local enterprises develop. To receive funding, a business is required to commit to using more Welsh and offer three ways in which they would do so; as of February 2026, 97 initiatives have confirmed their commitment.

The Service has also helped 175 local residents to return to work and a further 103 to increase their ability to earn more wages, which is helpful in sustaining our local communities and reducing outward migration.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service

The service provides information and support bilingually.

Our event grant fund is administered bilingually.

Guided visits to yr Ysgwrn and venues within the Slate designation for the Gwynedd and Eryri Ambassadors were held bilingually.

The training sessions for business and event organisers highlighted the support available from the Department and Welsh Government in terms of the use of the Welsh language in business and communications.

As part of the Diwylliesiant project (Shared Prosperity fund) an additional budget was secured to promote the special qualities of the area.

Below are the articles that cover the language and culture as featured on the Eryri /Snowdonia Mountains and Sea website and on the social media accounts

- *Ewch ati i frolio'r iaith* Article written by author and poet Rhys Iorwerth: | [Ewch ati i frolio'r iaith! | Eryri](#)
- Sw'n yn Eryri – Article promoting Welsh music concerts and events across Eryri and the Llŷn Peninsula [Sw'n Eryri 2026 | Eryri](#)
- *Creu, Cyfranogi a Chysylltu yn Eryri a Phen Llŷn* /Create, Participate and Connect in Eryri and the Llŷn Peninsula – An article that promotes arts and cultural experiences, as well as promoting the organisations that offer these experiences [Creu, Cyfranogi a Chysylltu yn Eryri a Phen Llŷn | Eryri](#)

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

Maritime Service: 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.

The Service has had very productive discussions with the Council's Welsh Language Learning and Development Officer over the past few months regarding the development of Welsh language learning resources for the service's seasonal officers. We have also agreed that the Officer will be part of a seasonal officer induction programme in 2026.

Some permanent officers of the Service have completed a 'confidence building' course in Welsh, and some are currently undertaking 'basic Welsh' on-line training.

Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour Service: 22% of the team members are Welsh learners. Training opportunities are available. This year there has been considerable encouragement for team members who have less confidence to develop their skills and support them to use Welsh in the workplace.

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
- continue to provide a programme of activities and events in Welsh that are dependent on grants and need to identify a long-term way to sustain this
- The outcome of our Storiol Audience Development and Marketing commission through the CELF (National Contemporary Art Gallery Network) scheme and the Lloyd George Museum's Audience Development and Marketing commission (SPF) provides feedback that will be useful to us in this field in the future.

Gwynedd Libraries and Neuadd Dwyfor: We will continue to:

- 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 Libraries Wales 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 Diwyllesiant by focusing on the promotion of Welsh Language literature and attracting new readers of all ages.
- Continue to develop a wider programme in the theatre with an emphasis on developing live Welsh language evenings with bands and artists, such as Al Lewis, Welsh of the West End, Cabarela and a Welsh-language Comedy Evening.

Gwynedd Archives Service: We would continue to:

- Offer an Archives and Museums Education Service to schools in the county providing material and activities through the medium of Welsh so that they can understand their communities, the importance of the Welsh language and local identity.
- Offer sessions and activities in our archives.
- Collaborate with organisations and societies to offer activities.

Regeneration Programmes Service: Linked to the Slate Cymru work, bilingual education resources will be developed for KS2 and 3. New resources to learn about heritage and the slate landscape have already been uploaded to the Slate Wales website, the You Tube channel and the People's Collection. In addition, a Language and History event will be held in the autumn, for an audience of newcomers to get a taste of the language and its origins, along with a session on the history and culture of the area.

Community Support Service: There will be collaboration with Menter Iaith Gwynedd to raise awareness of a new language policy they are developing for community and town councils and community groups.

Economic Development Service: It is a further period of change in the financing landscape of the economic development field. A small amount of short-term bridging funding has been secured for the ARFOR programme but no continuity expenditure for the programme. There will be a wider shift in funding as the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) ends and the Local Growth Fund becomes operational. Further opportunities will need to be considered to raise the status of the Welsh language and to ensure opportunities to use the Welsh language in planning for the new funding.

In the field of supporting people, there will be more support schemes available in 2026/27 as a result of new funding from the Welsh Government and the UK Government. Ensuring that there is an appreciation of the Welsh language as a skill in the world of work and ensuring opportunities to use the Welsh language will be planned within all provisions.

Following the adoption of a new Economic Development Strategy, a delivery plan will be developed which will include activity to strengthen the use and visibility of the Welsh language as a unique aspect of Gwynedd's economy.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service

The Shared Prosperity funding period is ending with a change of emphasis. Efforts will have to be made to find resources from other funding opportunities to raise awareness of the area's special qualities through our online and digital tourism accounts.

Highlight the opportunities that will arise to hold cultural events in the county with the support of a 26/27 Cyngor Gwynedd Event support fund.

3. Has the development of technology impaired your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh? If applicable, please provide an example. How do you ensure that the

development of technology does not affect your ability to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Maritime Service: 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 the production of 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. Some officers in the service use 'Artificial Intelligence' software such as 'ChatGPT' to help with the production of correspondence in Welsh. It is sometimes necessary to keep an eye out for "background" systems that still do not provide elements in Welsh such as receipts and hire/ticket systems.

Gwynedd Libraries Service 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.

Our Neuadd Dwyfor and Gwynedd Libraries Events ticket booking platforms can be used in Welsh.

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

Tourism, Marketing and Events service

Some challenges remain with the use of MS TEAMS to conduct and record our meetings bilingually.

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

Any other relevant data

Maritime Service:

Power Boat Registration Applications 2025/26	
Language Submitted	Number
Welsh	31
English	2384
Berth Applications	
Language Submitted	Number
Welsh	1
English	260

The number of forms completed in Welsh through our on-line service in 2025/26 is low, with only 32 forms completed in Welsh out of the 2676 submitted, namely 1.2%, which is slightly higher than the previous year (0.15%). This is to be expected as the majority of powerboat owners and berth holders are visitors.

Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour Service: This is not currently data we collect from users of our service. We plan to move to a new customer management system later in the year, so this could be possible in the near future. It is estimated that less than 20% of our 440 annual customers are Welsh and even fewer are Welsh speakers.

Museums and Arts Service: The number attending activities at the Museums in Welsh have been maintained. Around 3,500 have taken part although we do not have all the 2025/6 figures at the moment due to waiting for details of grants etc.

We have Welsh and English accounts for Facebook and Instagram.

Website user details are not available to us completely to report on a figure.

Archives Service: During 2025-2026, 6 sessions/activities were held through the medium of Welsh by the Archives Service or in collaboration with the county's Historical Society with 235 attending.

Regeneration Programmes Service: As a result of the Slate Wales work, and the LleChi LleNi scheme in particular, the following is in place:

- record the data of the attendee of project activities in schools, highlighting the numbers who made use of resources and responded bilingually.
- data available from users of the Welsh resources available on Slate Wales's You Tube channel.

In line with monitoring the choice of language, registration form for activities, and requests for the Simultaneous Translation service at meetings, lectures etc., approximately 72% of the people involved in Slate Wales activity do so through the medium of Welsh.

As a result of the work of working with partners and allocating grants, all organisations receiving a grant are required to comply with principles from Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Policy, for example that all signs displayed in public must be bilingual and that any marketing, promotion and publicity material must be bilingual.

Economic Development Service: Within the business support work area, all businesses requesting financial support are required to report on their business language profile. The following is a snapshot of the response of businesses requesting one of our recent business development grants:

All Welsh	17 (15%)
More Welsh than English	13 (12%)
Fully bilingual	30 (28%)
More English than Welsh	40 (37%)
All English	9 (8%)

In terms of supporting people, the 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 (2025/26).

Understand Welsh	75%
Speak Welsh	64%
Welsh Reading	62%
Writing in Welsh	60%

Each supported individual is offered a choice of which language they want us to use to communicate with them. Only 41% chose for us to communicate with them through the medium of Welsh over the past year.

Tourism, Marketing and Events service

Eryri Mynyddoedd a Môr – social media accounts

Number of followers on our Welsh medium Eryri Mynyddoedd and Môr , Social media accounts (for the period from 1/4/26 – 31/3/26):

Facebook – 2327

Instagram – 1406

X (Twitter) – 451

Gwynedd Ambassadors Programme

Gwynedd Ambassadors whom have completed the Cultural module by language choice:

Through English: **239 Bronze Ambassadors**

Welsh: **20 Bronze Ambassadors**

(259 Bronze Ambassadors in total)

59 New Ambassadors have enrolled on the course and have opted to carry out the courses through the medium of Welsh. (with 20 having achieved Bronze level status).

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

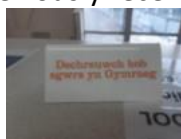
90.6% of the Department's staff have completed a Language Assessment, with arrangements in place for the remainder to either complete a self-assessment or a manager's assessment over the coming months. The results of the Language Assessment show that 94.8% of the Department's staff met the language designation of their post in 2025/26. Arrangements are in place to encourage and support those workers who are not yet meeting the requirements to develop their language skills in the workplace.

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

Below are some examples from services:

Maritime Service: Some officers within the service, because English is their first language, speak English together on occasions 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. All team meetings are held through the medium of Welsh.

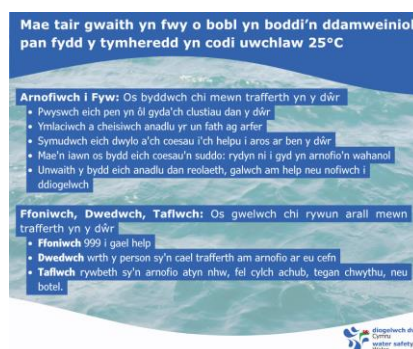
We encourage all customers who visit our offices to start every conversation in Welsh, and we also try to answer all phone calls with a bilingual message. The message under the e-mail signature of the majority of service staff welcomes anyone to use Welsh or English and we have previously received positive 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 offices) unfortunately, some information/material is only available in English, e.g. seafarers' manuals or safety posters. We are displaying the safety material of the Lifeboat (RNLI) and organisations such as Welsh Water Safety which is available in Welsh.

[Float to Live Toolkit: resources for download](#)



External organisations such as the Coastguard Agency, Trinity House, the UK Harbour Masters Association correspond in English only, and specialist training is usually only offered through the medium of English. In addition, 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 e-mail 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 this situation.

Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour Service: As with the Maritime service, external organisations such as the Coastguard Agency, Trinity House, the UK Harbour Masters Association correspond in English only, and specialist training is usually only offered through the medium of English. In addition, 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.

All members of the team speak Welsh, although some are less confident. Recruiting for certain positions with specific maritime skills can be challenging.

Museums and Arts Service: All members of the team speak Welsh. In the future, recruiting to some jobs with specific skills may be challenging.

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 also 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.

Gwynedd Libraries Service 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 many of our Libraries, namely Barmouth, Tywyn, Cricieth, Bethesda and Caernarfon Library. These sessions are an opportunity to present various materials and resources available from the library.

We have started a weekly Ji-Babi-Bach session at Bethesda Library and there is an opportunity for parents who are new speakers to take part in Welsh nursery rhymes sessions. 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.

During October and November 2025, the Welsh Language Commissioner carried out surveys to check local authority leisure and libraries' websites. The report highlights good practice, as well as areas where there is room to strengthen the use of Welsh, particularly in the provision that third party companies provide on our behalf. The review focused mainly on our Library Catalogue and on the Borrowbox platform. The report acknowledges that the non-compliance is due to issues such as some English words, but the WLC office considers that this treats Welsh less favourably than English and therefore breaches the standards. We are already in discussions with CIVICA – the company delivering the Catalogue as part of the all-Wales LMS – and are working on a solution. Borrowbox has historically been very supportive of any Welsh language provision, but a few English words have appeared recently, so we will be contacting the Company expecting a quick response and resolution from them for all the Welsh authorities that share the platform.

Regeneration Programmes Service: Through the work of Slate Wales there is praise and appreciation from attendees to extend vocabulary and speak Clear Welsh.

A note on social media appreciating the slate inlays on Tywyn pavements – *"These are really good, magical words in the dialect of Bro Dysynni"*

The departments report to the Language Committee in 2025: [Economy and Community Department.pdf](#)

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	20/04/2026
Department	Legal Services
Author	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.

Legal Services works with Council departments to contribute to specific policies, strategic plans, projects and work streams that contribute to the objectives of the language strategy.

Legal Services has responsibilities for:

Propriety including role of Monitoring Officer

Legal Services

Elections and Electoral Registration Team

Coroner's Support

Corporate Joint Committee (CBC) - The Council has a leading role in several regional partnerships and the Legal Services have played a central role in establishing the governance arrangements for these partnerships, e.g. the North Wales Joint Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). These services are now being taken in house. However, it is believed that this work has contributed a foundation on which CBC members can build moving forward.

Projects in the Council's plan

The Legal Services contribute to supporting and advising the work of the Council across all its functions. As well as providing advice and guidance to the Council, Cabinet and its committees on constitutional and legal matters. It is a key partner in this delivery.

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.
- 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.

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)

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 Legal Services have seen an increase in the development of technology and the Welsh language.:

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?

100% of Legal Services staff (25) have the skills to deliver all the requirements of the posts through the medium of Welsh and English. Stepping back from the regional work we do not have a reliance on locum lawyers to maintain the service. Unless a specific temporary requirement arises, there is no reason to think that this level cannot be maintained.

The Teams within the Legal Services have taken advantage of *Cynllun Yfory* and Apprenticeships Scheme to successfully support the training and development of staff within the Legal and Elections Team to develop new staff.

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

BARRIERS

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.

The employment situation specifically in the legal field 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. 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.

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.

As a 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 departments report to the Language Committee in 2025: [Leadership Team and Legal Services.pdf](#)