



GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY 2022

DRAFFT

1. FOREWORD

This Language Policy is published in accordance with Gwynedd Council's priorities and the requirements imposed on the Council under the Language Standards, Section 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

The purpose of the policy is to note how the Council and its employees will plan and prepare to ensure that every service responds to the need of the local population from a language perspective. It will also ensure the Council's compliance with the Language Standards.

Helping people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh has been identified as one of Gwynedd Council's improvement priorities in the Council's Plan. That priority supports the Well-being Plan's aim to "live in a naturally Welsh society".

The Council is also committed through its promotion strategy - Gwynedd's Welsh Language Promotion Plan - to take proactive steps to promote the language and increase opportunities for the people of Gwynedd to use the Welsh language in all aspects of their lives.

2. THE POLICY'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES

By operating in accordance with this policy, therefore, the Council will seek to ensure that:

- The Council's entire workforce operates in accordance with the basic principle set out in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language.
- The Council's corporate identity reflects its commitment and the priority given to the Welsh language.
- Staff will take advantage of every opportunity to encourage and promote the use of Welsh among service users.

- The Welsh and English languages will be treated equally when providing services, ensuring that all residents of the county can use the Council's services through the medium of Welsh and English according to personal choice, and that decisive action is taken to ensure that the chosen language is noted and respected at all times.
- That services or activities that provide additional opportunities for people to use the Welsh language within their communities will be promoted appropriately and effectively.
- A responsibility is placed on **all** Council Officers and Members to promote the Welsh language in all aspects of their work.
- All external bodies are encouraged to communicate with the Council solely through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- Any external bodies or businesses that provide services on behalf of the Council are expected to do so in accordance with the Standards imposed on the Council itself. Clear expectations will be set out in service agreements and appropriate monitoring arrangements will be put in place and followed.
- Consideration of the impact of decisions and policies on the Welsh language and its use within the county's communities will be a key part of the Council's wider impact assessment arrangements. The Welsh language has not been identified as an Equality characteristic, but the Council nevertheless sees a close relationship between equality and language issues, the way we consider the impact and importance of Welsh language services and equality issues. The Well-being of Future Generations Act, and the local Well-being Plan, also give the Welsh language a key role when considering the well-being and sustainability of our communities. As a result, an impact assessment framework has been developed that encompasses all these areas - equality, well-being and language - ensuring that consideration of the importance of Welsh language services is mainstreamed within those arrangements.

3. THE POLICY - IMPLEMENTING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS IN THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL

SECTION 1. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

(Service Delivery Standards 1, 4, 5, 6, 7)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We will respect the freedom of the individual/public to communicate with the Council in Welsh or English.

We will make every effort to record language choice, and to communicate in accordance with that choice.

We will encourage other individuals and organisations to use the Welsh language when communicating with us.

- 1.1 Council staff should reply to all letters in the same language as originally written, and in accordance with the corporate letter-answering targets of acknowledging the correspondence within 7 working days and replying in full within 15 working days.
- 1.2 If there is a need to correspond (by e-mail or letter) after speaking to someone face to face or over the phone, any written correspondence should adhere to the language of choice in the original conversation, or the language chosen by the user if they have specifically expressed that they would like written information in a language other than their chosen spoken language.
- 1.3 All mass correspondence should be sent bilingually. This includes any letter that is sent to more than one person using the same template (they do not have to be sent at the same time) - such as replies to requests on the self-service system.
- 1.4 If letters are sent from a computer/self-service system where language choice is indicated and the information is personalised in some way, for example by using a case reference, these do not have to be sent bilingually and can be sent in the individual's language of choice.
- 1.5 When a member of staff commences correspondence with any individual, society or company in the form of a letter or e-mail, this correspondence should be written bilingually. An officer may write in Welsh only if he/she is certain that the recipient understands Welsh and wishes to receive correspondence in Welsh.
- 1.6 Council staff should always write to public bodies and devolved bodies in Wales **in Welsh only**.
- 1.7 If another body that is also subject to the Language Standards (in particular other local authorities and the Welsh Government) sends correspondence in English only, Council staff should request a Welsh copy of the correspondence before responding to the body in Welsh. If no Welsh correspondence is received upon request, the correspondence should be replied to in Welsh and the Language and Scrutiny Unit notified.

- 1.8 Council staff should include a statement on any correspondence noting that the public are welcome to communicate with them in Welsh and that communication in Welsh will not lead to any delay.
- 1.9 The accuracy of any correspondence being sent must be ensured. All of the Council's staff are encouraged to use the Welsh Windows interface and CySill and to use clear and simple language.

SECTION 2. TELEPHONE SERVICES

(Service Delivery Standards 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Council will ensure that any enquiry can be dealt with fully in Welsh when the public contact by phone.

- 2.1 The Council will ensure that any member of the public can receive a service through the medium of Welsh or English when contacting over the phone.
- 2.2 Every member of frontline staff and every automated electronic answering system - in the Council's headquarters, regional offices and other public spaces - will answer telephone calls bilingually (in Welsh first and then in English) and in a welcoming manner.
- 2.3 The Council will endeavour to ensure that all members of staff who receive telephone calls from the public will be able to greet the calls in Welsh.
- 2.4 If a member of the public calling wishes to have the matter dealt with in Welsh, but the officer who answers the call is unable to speak Welsh fluently enough to deal with the matter **in full**, the officer should explain this after greeting the caller, and offer to transfer the call to another member of staff who will be able to deal with the matter in full in the caller's chosen language. In cases where the officer who answers the call is a Welsh-learner, the officer is encouraged to use his/her Welsh to the best of his/her ability.
- 2.5 Messages on all the Council's answering machines will be bilingual, with the Welsh message heard first.
- 2.6 When a member of staff telephones a member of the public for the first time, the staff member will make sure that he/she is aware of the individual's language choice, making a note of this if necessary to ensure that any future telephone calls from the service will also be made in Welsh.

SECTION 3. MEETINGS - INCLUDING THE PUBLIC AND EXTERNAL STAFF

(Standards 23, 25, 27, 27A, 27CH, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Welsh is the Council's principal language of operation. All meetings arranged by Council staff will be conducted through the medium of Welsh.

Those attending Council meetings are encouraged to contribute in Welsh, but we will also respect and facilitate language choice.

The Council will arrange simultaneous translation where necessary to ensure that non-Welsh-speaking attendees are able to follow the meeting and participate fully.

In accordance with the Council's aim, it will try and ensure that bilingual staff are always available so as to conduct meetings according to the member of the public's language choice. As the vast majority of the Council's staff are bilingual, we should not find ourselves in a situation where the language of a meeting with a member of the public has to be changed to English.

- 3.1 Officers should ensure that anyone who is invited to an **internal** Council meeting is aware that the Council's meetings are held through the medium of Welsh. They should be given an opportunity to specify whether they wish to contribute through the medium of Welsh or English and the Council's officers will have a duty to ensure that a translation service is available if needed, to ensure that the meeting is held through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.2 If a member of the public attends a meeting relating to **well-being** (i.e. any personal matters), and wishes to discuss those matters through the medium of Welsh, the meeting **must** be conducted according to the individual's language of choice.
- 3.3 Council officers must ensure that any staff (from the Council itself or any other body/agency) in attendance at well-being meetings are able to speak Welsh, and if not, that arrangements are in place to ensure that this has no bearing on the ability to conduct that meeting in Welsh if this is the individual's wish. The language of the meeting **MUST NOT** be changed for the benefit of the officers.
- 3.4 The Welsh language will be the main language of any **public** meetings held by the Council. When a public meeting, hearing or inquiry is organised by the Council, officers should conduct and lead the meeting through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.5 The public have the right to speak Welsh or English, as they choose, in any public meeting arranged by the Council, and a simultaneous translation service will be arranged to ensure that those who do not understand and speak Welsh are able to

understand and contribute effectively to the meeting.

- 3.6 Chairs or leading officers of any public meetings will be expected to draw attention to the simultaneous translation provision at the beginning of the meeting, and encourage attendees to use this equipment to promote language choice.
- 3.7 All documents relating to a public meeting are expected to be produced and published bilingually. It will also be necessary to ensure that all agendas, invitations or advertisements for the meeting include a statement noting that the public meeting will be conducted through the medium of Welsh and that a translation service will be available to those who wish to contribute and follow the meeting through the medium of English.
- 3.8 Council officers will be expected to contribute through the medium of Welsh at public meetings, committees or conferences arranged by other authorities or public organisations, and they are encouraged to ensure that the organisers offer a simultaneous translation provision to enable them to contribute if required.
- 3.9 Any activities or training undertaken by the Council for the public will be offered in Welsh only or bilingually with a simultaneous translation service. (Standard 84)

SECTION 4 - PUBLICATIONS AND WRITTEN MATERIAL

(Service Delivery Standards 38, 40, 48, 49, 50, 50A, 50B, 51, 52, 55, 56)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Welsh is the Council's principal language of operation, which means that Welsh is given priority when writing internal reports and documents.

All the Council's public documents - including reports, plans, posters, forms and explanatory material, press releases, public notices and consultation documents - will be available in Welsh and English.

Any official documents published on the Council's website will be available in both languages, with the ability to switch easily from one version to another.

The Council will not publish/distribute English-only documents, on paper or on the Council's website, unless a Welsh version is also available at the same time.

Every effort will be made to produce short documents bilingually, to ensure that the public see the Welsh language at every opportunity.

- 4.1 Officers will ensure that any written material which is intended for the public, is

- available in Welsh and English. This includes printed written material and material that is shared electronically.
- 4.2 Any leaflets sent out to residents will be bilingual and placed in envelopes in a way that ensures that the Welsh language is seen first on opening.
 - 4.3 If Officers share written material from other organisations (either in the form of documents, or by reference to other sources such as websites) the Officers will be expected to make every effort to ensure that the material is available in Welsh as well as in English. If documents are shared as part of consultation work, and the external organisation is unable to provide bilingual copies, arrangements must be made for them to be translated in-house before the documents are made public.
 - 4.4 Officers should ensure that any written material is in a standard format and style, in Welsh and English, and that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably in terms of format, size, quality and clarity. This includes ensuring that any material is comprehensible and clear to the public, and follows the principles of Cymraeg Clir/ Plain English.
 - 4.5 Priority should be given to the Welsh language in any public written material. This means that the Welsh text will be placed either above or to the left of the English text.
 - 4.6 Any leaflets, pamphlets and documents that are publicly distributed should be designed as printed versions in such a way as to ensure that the two languages appear together. This can be bilingual text on the same page or a document with both languages printed back to back.
 - 4.7 Should the Council, for any reason (e.g. document size, website publication) have to publish Welsh and English versions separately, they will be published at the same time, and the English version will state clearly that a Welsh version is available to encourage residents to access the Welsh version.
 - 4.8 It should be ensured that any documents that are **printed** as separate Welsh and English paper versions are available together and that the Welsh version is offered first to the public.
 - 4.9 Any signs erected in any public space under the Council's responsibility will be bilingual, with Welsh appearing first, and English following underneath.
 - 4.10 We will also seek to ensure that any notices or posters by other organisations and companies displayed on Council premises are also in Welsh or are bilingual. English only posters shall not be displayed in Council buildings.
 - 4.11 Every statement by the Council to the press or media will be bilingual.
 - 4.12 Responses to enquiries from the press or media will be sent in Welsh or English, depending on the language of the reporter concerned.

- 4.13 All material used to raise awareness, market, promote and attract investment to the area will note and acknowledge the importance of the Welsh language.
- 4.14 Any marketing campaigns carried out by or on behalf of the Council will be fully bilingual, including exhibitions, information stalls and conferences. This means that any advertising, publishing or research work will be fully bilingual.
- 4.15 The following exceptions to the above clauses are allowed:
- a) A document that relates specifically to activities, the main purpose of which is to encourage and promote the Welsh language, and/or which relate to an event that supports the language and culture of the area. This may include events such as Urdd and National Eisteddfod activities or activities by partners in promoting the Welsh language.
 - b) Announcements or advertisements for radio or television programmes on Welsh language stations or channels.
 - c) Advertisements in the Welsh language press which will appear in Welsh only.
- 4.16 Any documents or announcements intended for an audience outside Wales, or advertisements for radio stations and television channels outside Wales, are expected to include some Welsh. As an attempt to promote the language as an integral part of the county's identity and culture, materials may not be published solely in English.
- 4.17 Advertisements and publicity on behalf of a third party which appear on Council property, land or buildings, are expected to follow the above guidelines. Where there is an agreement between the Council and another party for the use of Council property, land or buildings, a condition to this effect will be included in the agreement, including associated publicity (e.g. posters, advertisements).

SECTION 5 - DIGITAL SERVICES - WEBSITE, APPS AND SELF-SERVICE

(Service Delivery Standards 56, 57, 58, 59, 60)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Council will seek to ensure that all apps and electronic systems it uses to provide services to the public are fully bilingual.

The Council will consider developing apps and systems of its own where possible, to ensure that they work completely bilingually, and that the Welsh language is given prominence.

Any written material published electronically will follow the guidelines noted for written material above.

Switching between the Welsh and English versions of the website pages will be easy, and statements will clearly indicate that a Welsh version is available if Welsh and English documents are published separately without the capacity to toggle.

- 5.1 Any websites developed by the Council will give priority to the Welsh language, will navigate the user to the Welsh page as the default where possible, and will allow easy switching between the equivalent pages in Welsh and English.
- 5.2 Any social media accounts (such as Facebook and Twitter) will follow the guidelines available from the Communications Unit and present information bilingually, with Welsh appearing first every time.
- 5.3 Any response to messages or comments received on social media will be written in the same language, so all Welsh language comments will be replied to in Welsh.
- 5.4 Any forms or questionnaires offered by the Council through a self-service method will be in Welsh and English, with the individuals selecting their language of choice when registering for the service.
- 5.5 Any letters or responses to requests through the online self-service system will be sent in the language chosen by the user.
- 5.6 Any self-service machines used in service settings will operate fully bilingually, and if possible will offer Welsh as the first/default language.
- 5.7 When commissioning or purchasing new IT systems for use as part of providing a service to the public, the Council will seek to ensure equality of access for all, and will ensure that no additional steps are required to use the Welsh version, which would

mean that we treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

- 5.8 Should any Department or service within the Council commission/purchase new systems themselves for use as part of providing a service to the public, they will be expected to consult with the IT service, the Website team and the Language and Scrutiny Unit to ensure that the systems comply with the above requirements and are adequately tested prior to use.

SECTION 6 - SIGNAGE

(Service Delivery Standards 61, 62, 63, 141, 142, 143)

- 6.1 All signs erected by the Council in a public place will be bilingual, with Welsh first. This includes signs placed in Council buildings and service settings and also public street/road signs.
- 6.2 Officers will be responsible for ensuring that the language and meaning are clear on any signs, posters, information notices.
- 6.3 The Council will ensure that any third party providers or contractors also use bilingual signs which follow the same principle of Welsh language prominence and accuracy.
- 6.4 The Council will undertake to use, to the best of its ability, Welsh names for locations and dwellings where English names also exist. New signs will be installed in Welsh only, and changes to old bilingual signs will be considered as appropriate, and when being replaced.

SECTION 7 - RECEPTION AREAS

(Service Delivery Standards 64, 67, 68, 69)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The principle of the proactive offer will be followed and all frontline staff in Council reception areas will start the conversation in Welsh.

- 7.1 The public will be able to receive a fully bilingual service in each of the Council's public reception areas. This means that all customer advisers and receptionists in library and school reception areas, etc. will be able to communicate bilingually.
- 7.2 Signs will be displayed in Council reception areas and any public service points to clearly indicate that a Welsh language service can be provided to encourage the public to use Welsh and to ensure that language choice is noted and respected.

- 7.3 Reception and public service point staff will be encouraged, where appropriate, to wear 'Cymraeg'/'Iaith Gwaith' badges or lanyards that will enable the public to identify the Welsh speakers or learners who can provide a Welsh-medium service for them.

SECTION 8 - GRANTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

(Service Delivery Standards 71, 72, 72A, 73, 75)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Council has a sub-policy to this Language Policy which sets out the expectations regarding the awarding of grants, and which meets the requirements of Standard 94. Staff will be expected to follow this sub-policy when considering any arrangements where grants or financial assistance are shared with the public.

- 8.1 Any funding or grant from the Council is used as a public tool for promoting the use of the Welsh language locally. This could be by increasing the day-to-day spoken use of the Welsh language or by visually promoting the Welsh language.
- 8.2 Conditions for language use will be set within any grant agreements, depending on the nature of the grant and the activity being funded.
- 8.3 The Council will expect institutions, organisations, bodies and individuals providing services to the business community locally to do so bilingually, and in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and the Welsh Language Standards.
- 8.4 The Council will expect businesses that receive grants or financial assistance to make every effort to promote the Welsh language, to use it visually in the business, and to offer employment opportunities where Welsh language skills are recognised.
- 8.6 All correspondence relating to the allocation of grants or service tenders will be in Welsh and English.
- 8.7 All the processes involved in awarding grants and financial assistance will be conducted bilingually, and it will be possible for anyone to have a meeting or interview in the context of grants or financial assistance through the medium of Welsh. It will be the responsibility of Council officers to ensure that simultaneous translation is provided if needed.

SECTION 9 - PROCUREMENT AND TENDERING PROCESSES (JOINT PROVISION, COMMISSIONING AND OUTSOURCING OF SERVICES)

(Service Delivery Standards 76, 77, 77A, 78, 80)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Arrangements for joint-provision and joint-funding of services, as well as outsourcing of services, are increasingly used by the Council and are essential for the future. In developing structures and agreements with others, the Council will protect and secure the needs of the County's residents in terms of receiving bilingual services.

We will take advantage of every opportunity to raise awareness of the profile and importance of the Welsh language within the County among our joint-providers and to collaborate towards improved bilingual provision across all services.

Ensuring the rights of individuals to Welsh language services will form a core part of any work to outsource or set up an agreement for services.

We will follow the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on out-sourcing and contracting work=[c-gosod-contractau-gwasanaethau-cyhoeddus.pdf \(comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru\)](https://www.welshlanguage.gov.uk/comisiynyddygydraeg/cymru/c-gosod-contractau-gwasanaethau-cyhoeddus.pdf)

- 9.1 Any provision contracts will refer to this policy and contain clauses that will clearly set out the requirements and expectations on external providers to ensure compliance with the requirements of this Policy.
- 9.2 When drafting and reviewing joint-provision and joint-funding contracts, the Council will ensure compliance with this policy, to ensure that the arrangements do not lead to any deterioration in Welsh language provision for the public. We will monitor the contracts to ensure compliance.
- 9.3 If a service is outsourced, or a contract/tender is awarded to provide a service in a Council-owned building, they will be expected to operate to the same standards as set out in this Policy and every effort will be made to ensure that the business or service is conducted bilingually. If appropriate, the Council will ask the provider to draw up an independent language policy that reflects the exact nature of the work and service offered.
- 9.4 The Council works in partnership with a number of public bodies, voluntary sector organisations and other agencies. In any situation of collaboration, the Council will ensure that all organisations operate in accordance with the guidance of the Welsh Language Commissioner (Public Service Contracts Contracting Out Guide), and that planning should be undertaken to ensure compliance with the highest relevant Standards in any situation joint-provision. It should therefore be ensured that any situation of joint-provision or outsourcing the delivery of services does not

contravene the requirements of Gwynedd Council's Welsh Language Standards, and puts the Council at risk of failing to comply.

The Council will also take the following steps:

- i. When the Council leads a partnership, strategically and operationally, it will ensure that the public provision is in accordance with the Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards.
 - ii. When the Council joins a partnership, which is led by another organisation, the Council's input to the partnership will conform to the Language Policy and the Council will encourage the other parties to operate to the same standards.
 - iii. When the Council operates as part of consortia, it will encourage the consortia to adopt a language policy. When working in the public domain in the name of the consortia, the Council will operate in accordance with its Language Policy.
 - iv. When the Council joins or forms a partnership, it will ask prospective partners about their Language Policies, or how they operate bilingually. As a part of each partnership, the Council will offer advice to the other parties involved in the partnership.
- 9.5 The Council will be able to support the above, e.g. by offering advice on bilingualism and hiring translation equipment.

SECTION 10 - POLICY MAKING

(Policy Making Standards 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Council sees a close relationship between Welsh language standards and equality issues. An impact assessment is expected of any new policy or procedure, or a change to a policy or procedure, covering equality, human rights and socio-economic issues as well as the Welsh language. This avoids duplication and ensures that we comply with all the duties in these fields.

The aim is to follow the advice set out by the Commissioner in the document:

[Policy Making Standards: Creating opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language \(comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru\)](#)

10.1 The Council will follow internal impact assessment processes which will ensure that the Welsh language is considered alongside equality and well-being issues when considering the impact of any decisions or plans on the Welsh language.

10.2 The likely linguistic impact of any new strategic policy or plan will be assessed in the

planning and development of the strategic policy or plan, and the policy or plan will be modified as appropriate if a potential negative impact is identified in order to maximise the positive impact.

- 10.3 Where appropriate, the Council will establish monitoring arrangements for strategic plans, so that the impact can be measured, and evidence gathered on the link between the plans and the Council's language promotion objectives.
- 10.4 The Council will ensure that any new plans, initiatives or policies comply with the Council's wider commitments to encourage and promote the Welsh language, and that every opportunity is taken to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language within the county's communities.
- 10.5 Service Managers will ensure that full consideration is given to the possible linguist effect of any policy decisions when forming a new policy, or any reviews or adaptations to existing policies. Assessments will be conducted where appropriate to ensure that no new policies have an adverse or negative impact on sustaining the Welsh language in the county.
- 10.6 Any research or consultation conducted in relation to new policies will be required to pay adequate attention to the possible language impact of any decisions.

SECTION 11 - THE COUNCIL'S INTERNAL OPERATIONS

(Operational Standards 98, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 112A, 113, 115, 116, 116A, 117, 119, 120, 121, 124, 126, 128, 129, 141, 142, 143, 144)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Council operates internally mainly through the medium of Welsh. This means that meetings, and internal communications, are in Welsh. The Welsh language will always be given priority in any oral statements, information bulletins, and on posters and signs.

All in-house services for staff, including work policies and the staff intranet and self-service, are provided in Welsh.

All staff will be expected to use Welsh versions of computer software.

All staff will be expected to use an e-mail signature that states that they are Welsh speakers or learners.

Any relevant policies relating to staff rights, disciplinary and grievances processes, will highlight the rights of individuals under the requirements of the Standards. The Council will respect the right of members of staff to exercise their choice of language, and will provide personal information in the language of their choice.

- 11.1 It is expected that internal Council meetings - including team meetings and meetings between officers to discuss collaboration - are conducted in Welsh.
- 11.2 It is expected that most internal communications are in Welsh, and that reports, work programmes, etc. are produced in Welsh first.
- 11.3 If documents need to be shared with colleagues (internal or external) who cannot speak Welsh, a translation service is available.
- 11.4 The Council's intranet will be in Welsh only, and staff e-mail information bulletins will be in Welsh. English versions of the information bulletins will be provided as an attachment to the e-mail.
- 11.5 Information on the intranet will be mainly in Welsh, with information shared in English as required.
- 11.6 Any information relating to employment matters on staff self-service, and any policies or guidelines on key matters such as Health and Safety, will be available through the medium of Welsh and English.
- 11.7 Any member of staff can submit complaints through the medium of Welsh or English, and any case should be dealt with in the staff member's chosen language.
- 11.8 Every member of staff will be entitled to deal with any disciplinary matters or any other matters relating to working conditions or performance through their chosen language, in Welsh or in English.
- 11.9 **ALL** training offered by the Council will be provided in Welsh. Every step will be taken to help staff participate in training through the medium of Welsh, and training through the medium of English will not be offered for core subjects unless absolutely necessary.
- 11.10 Consideration should be given to the use of simultaneous translation in training sessions, where practicable, to enable staff who lack confidence in Welsh to participate effectively, in order to ensure that Welsh is maintained as the main internal administrative language, and to provide informal, supportive opportunities for staff to practise their Welsh language skills.

Supporting staff

- 11.11 In order to enable the Council to operate in accordance with this policy, the Council's staff will be required to be able to communicate effectively in Welsh and English, up to the appropriate standard and in order to be able to deliver their duties in full.
- 11.12 The Council wishes to work with its staff to reach that situation and every support and encouragement will be given to employees to increase their confidence and

ability in Welsh. At the same time, the Council expects its staff to be committed and to co-operate to achieve that aim.

- 11.13 Staff are encouraged to develop their language skills and they will be released, if necessary, to learn or refresh their skills. The Council will provide for training staff on many levels and will prepare funding for that.
- 11.14 Line Managers will be responsible for encouraging staff to attend training and assess the need for refresher training or skills improvement within their teams.
- 11.15 Language Awareness training will also be offered to the entire workforce, which will raise awareness about the importance of the Welsh language and its history.
- 11.16 There will also be an opportunity for elected members wishing to improve their linguistic skills to join the Council's language training.
- 11.17 The Dafydd Orwig Memorial Prize is awarded annually to learners in order to acknowledge the efforts of staff who have made particular progress over the past twelve months. The prize also acknowledges the work and contribution of language Mentors.

SECTION 12 - JOB ADVERTISEMENT AND THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

(Operational Standards 136, 136A, 137, 137A, 137B, 140)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Welsh language is regarded as an essential skill for every post within the Council.

The linguistic requirements of each post must be assessed against the language framework.

Job interviews will be conducted in Welsh.

An assessment of the language skills of all staff must be undertaken, either on appointment, or as part of induction arrangements.

General/Determining Language Requirements

- 12.1 The Welsh language should be noted as a key skill **essential** for all posts, with the exact level of language skills required to deliver the post's requirements - listening and speaking, reading and comprehension, and writing - clearly noted in the Person Specification when advertising.
- 12.2 The Manager will determine the exact level of communication ability and skills that will be required to deliver **all** the post's requirements by using the Council's Language Framework.

- 12.3 When a post becomes vacant, managers must ensure that the language requirements are up to date and are suitable for the requirements of the post.
- 12.4 The Council has an internal Recruitment Policy, which provides further guidance to managers on the process to be followed when appointing, and the language requirements to consider at various stages.
- 12.5 For posts where the language requirements are a core part of delivering the post's duties (e.g. in frontline posts where there is a need to deal with the public), individuals must reach the required level from the starting date of their employment.
- 12.6 In other circumstances (e.g. if we have failed to appoint someone with all the required skills at the first attempt) it may be appropriate to appoint individuals who possess other relevant skills and who demonstrate a commitment to developing the language skills over time. In such cases, the Organisational Learning and Development service will be able to provide bespoke support and training, and a suitable development programme will be drawn up in agreement between the Council as the employer, the manager, and post-holder in order to bridge the gap between the skills of the individual and the skills required for the job.
- 12.7 It is the appointing manager's responsibility to ensure that the individual is referred to the Organisational Learning and Development Service as appropriate, that they attend any identified training, and develop their skills.

Advertising

- 12.8 Every staff recruitment advertisement published by the Council will be bilingual, with the exception of teaching posts which are advertised in Welsh only.
- 12.9 All job advertisements will include a sentence which highlights the Council's Welsh-medium internal administration and the need for appropriate language skills among employees.
- "Gwynedd Council operates internally through the medium of Welsh, and offers all its services bilingually. The applicant will be required to reach the linguistic level noted in the Person Specification."*
- 12.10 All candidates are encouraged to submit application forms in Welsh, or bilingually, as a way of demonstrating an understanding of the Welsh language within the Council.
- 12.11 If it is not possible to appoint someone with the necessary linguistic skills after advertising once, consideration can be given to receiving applications from applicants who do not meet the language requirements immediately, but who are willing to commit to learn.

THE LANGUAGE DESIGNATION OF THE POST ITSELF WILL NOT BE CHANGED WHEN RE-ADVERTISING.

- 12.12 In such circumstances, the wording that appears in the advertisement will be changed to the following:

Rydym yn awyddus i ystyried ceisiadau gan unigolion sydd, o bosib, yn is na lefel iaith y swydd ar hyn o bryd, ond bydd gofyn i'r ymgeisydd llwyddiannus ymrwymo i ddysgu neu ddatblygu i lefel iaith y swydd o fewn amserlen resymol. Bydd y Cyngor yn rhoi cefnogaeth i gyflawni hynny.

English:

We are eager to consider applications from individuals who, possibly, do not currently reach the language level of the post, but the successful applicant would be required to commit to either learn, or develop language skills to the required level within a reasonable timescale. The Council will provide support to achieve this.

Appointing/Interviews

- 12.13 Each interview will be held in Welsh, with one question asked in English in order to provide an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate their skills in both languages.
- 12.14 **The documentation inviting individuals to an interview will note clearly that the interviews will be conducted in Welsh, and that the relevant officer must be contacted in the event of the need to make alternative arrangements.**
- 12.15 If a member of the interview panel is a non-Welsh speaker (e.g. if an external representative is required for any reason) this will not affect the individual's right to a Welsh language interview and the Council will take the responsibility for any translation requirements.

SECTION 13 - OTHER MATTERS - ACCOUNTABILITY

Staff

- 13.1 It is expected for every member of staff employed by the Council to comply with this policy. At the same time, it is recognised that some staff and departments are not subject to the Welsh Language Standards for various reasons. This includes:
- staff of GwE and the Trunk Road Agency, and the Ambition Board, which operate at arm's length and under joint-committee status;
 - school teaching staff, who are directly employed by the schools and governing bodies;
 - election staff, who come under the responsibility of the Returning Officer, a role which is independent of the Council.
- 13.2 The Education Department and Language and Scrutiny Unit have prepared a template language policy for use by schools, which reflects the general principles

and commitments in this policy to operate in a way that ensures that the public's right to Welsh language services is always respected. That policy has been shared with all governing bodies of primary and secondary schools in the county, with the hope that it will be adopted and implemented.

Volunteers

- 13.3 If volunteers are used to provide services or activities on behalf of the Council, it should be ensured that they are also aware of the need to provide bilingually and recruit those who are able to communicate in Welsh and English where possible. If volunteers who are not Welsh speakers are recruited, the Council officer or manager should ensure that this does not disrupt the service's ability to offer the activity bilingually.
- 13.4 If volunteers are recruited for the long-term (more than a single activity), it should be ensured that an element of Welsh language awareness or confidence boosting is included in any training for the role.

Elected Members

- 13.5 Elected members are part of the internal procedures of the Council, but they are not subject to the Standards in the same way as the Council's paid employees are.
- 13.6 They are, nevertheless, expected to adhere to and respect the principles of the Council with regard to the Welsh language and to be aware of the requirements on the Council's services and staff.
- 13.7 All members are offered face-to-face and online language awareness training to develop their understanding of the Council's obligations under the Welsh Language Measure and other relevant frameworks and legislation such as the Well-being Act, the Equality Act and the More than Just Words framework.
- 13.8 Elected Members who sit on the Council's Language Committee will have a role to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Standards and Policy. The Language and Scrutiny Unit and Council Departments will submit regular reports to provide them with updates on relevant issues.

SECTION 14 - MONITORING AND REPORTING

(Record Keeping Standards 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153)

Monitoring

- 14.1 The Council will report annually on its compliance with the Language Standards to the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- 14.2 An internal self-assessment process will be implemented, with departments monitoring compliance and reporting any problems or barriers to the Language and

Scrutiny Unit.

- 14.3 Actions and a developmental work programme will be drawn up on the basis of any identified gaps in order to work consistently towards performance improvement.

Language Complaints

- 14.4 The Council welcomes any complaint against the administering of our Language Policy as evidence of our performance and as an opportunity for improvement.
- 14.5 We will deal with each language complaint according to the Council's corporate standards. The Language and Scrutiny Unit is responsible for monitoring language complaints and they are regularly reported to the Language Committee. The Unit will follow the procedure of reporting formally on any complaints made that have been dealt with in full, and informally on complaints that are still to be resolved. A further explanation of the process we will follow, and the role of the Commissioner, has been published on the Council's website. [Welsh Language Standards and Policy \(llyw.cymru\)](#)
- 14.6 Any complaints relating to this Language Policy or the Council's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (2015) will be reported to the Language Commissioner annually.

Review

- 14.7 This policy will be reviewed regularly, and adapted as required.