

MEETING:	LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
DATE:	27 June 2023
TITLE:	Gwynedd Council Annual Report on the implementation of Welsh Language Standards
AUTHOR:	Gwenllian Williams Language Advisor
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	Present the Annual Report to the Members in order for them to recommend that it be approved by the Cabinet Member to publish.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 As part of the Welsh Language Standards, as set by Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 the Council must “*produce a report (an "annual report"), in Welsh, in relation to each financial year, which deals with the way in which you have complied with the service delivery standards with which you were under a duty to comply during that year*”.

1.2 The Standards set specific requirements for the content of the annual report (standards 158, 164 and 170) and asks us to include the following information:

- *the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the standards*
- *the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 151);*
- *the number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152);*
- *if a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152);*
- *the number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where –*
 - (i) Welsh language skills were essential,*
 - (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post,*
 - (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable, or*
 - (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary, (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154);*

1.3 Beyond this information, the Council is free to include any information that we feel is relevant and would help the public and the Language Commissioner to understand the work being done by the Council in relation to the standards and in promoting the use of Welsh language services, as well as information about specific steps taken to ensure compliance with the Standards.

1.4 As the Language Committee has a duty to oversee the implementation of the language standards, the attached report, for the year up to March 2023, is presented to the committee members for their information, and they are asked for their recommendation for the report to be published by the Cabinet Member.

1.5 The final report will need to be published on the Council website by June 30 2023.

2. SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

2.1 The report includes key information about recruitment and staffing procedures, that ensures that the Council workforce continues to be able to provide a Welsh medium service proactively, and wherever it is needed across the Council. The key data includes:

- 99.4% of Council staff have some degree of Welsh language skills
- 93% of staff reach the Foundation level or higher, and so can speak Welsh
- 833 job adverts were published over the year where language skills were essential

2.2 Information is also included about developments during the year to improve compliance and to ensure the best bilingual service to the residents of Gwynedd, including:

- New Welsh Language Policy approved and published, as well as supplementary policies, such as the grant awarding policy, in order to respond to certain obligations within the standards.
- Specific steps take to strengthen and improve compliance regarding consultation on policy decisions.
- Review of IT systems underway to ensure that they comply with the Policy in respect of using Welsh place names, and the Standards in respect of replying to correspondence in Welsh or bilingually.

2.3 The report also highlights some of the challenges that the Language and Scrutiny Unit, and services across the Council, will be trying to address during the year to come in order to improve the bilingual provision and the Welsh active offer.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:

- accept the content of the Annual Report,
- offer any observations on the matters contained within the report, and:
- recommend the Cabinet Member publish the report in line with the deadline of 30 June 2032.