

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>FULL COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3 MARCH, 2016</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>A LANGUAGE POLICY FOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>(a) To establish that the Council's Language Policy is part of the Policy framework that should be adopted by the full Council (b) To adopt a Language Policy for the Council</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn</b>

1. At the moment, the Council's statutory commitments with regard to the Welsh Language are summarised in the Council's statutory Language Plan but the system of language plans is coming to an end with the introduction of the new Language Standards from 1 April, 2016. From that point, we will be reporting annually on our Language Standards rather than a language plan.
2. In essence, the Standards set a minimum for the provision of Welsh and the fact is that that minimum is too low to address the Council's ambition for the Welsh Language in several fields. During the discussion on the draft Standards, it was emphasised several times that we did not want them to weaken the Council's current position.
3. Therefore, we have concluded that we need more than an internal policy document that will address the Council's ambition for the Welsh Language in all our services. The attached document is an adaptation and update of the old Language Plan that has been discussed with the Language Committee. An Equalities Assessment of the Policy document has been undertaken and there were no matters of concern that needed to be addressed. A copy of the assessment is available to any member on request.
4. Under the Constitution, the Language Plan was part of the Policy Framework that had to be adopted by the Council. However, legal advice has been received to the effect that such is not the case with the Language Policy. It is suggested, however, that, because of the importance of this Policy to the Council's strategic objectives, that the Language Policy should be included in the Policy Framework that should be adopted by the full Council.
5. It is recommended to the full Council:-
  - (a) To add the Language Policy to the list of policies within the Policy Framework to be adopted by the full Council
  - (b) To adopt the policy appended to this report as Gwynedd Council's Language Policy