Meeting	Language Committee
Date	13 October 2025
Title	Welsh Language Promotion Plan – Finance Department
Purpose	Present information about the contribution of Finance Department to promote and further the Welsh language
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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)

Projects in the Council's plan

Cyngor Gwynedd Digital Plan 2023/2028
The scheme covers 29 projects to support Cyngor Gwynedd to become a DIGITAL COUNCIL, where technology is used wisely for more economic and effective service delivery, and where the customer is increasingly central in everything we do.

The principles of equality and well-being run throughout the Plan, including the Welsh language and the sustainability element of the Five Ways of Working, with the commitment to include the Welsh language in a Digital Suitability Assessment regime for the installation of any digital development within the Council. The suitability assessment will bring on digital standards published by the Welsh Language Commissioner, implementing them for any internal development or solution procurement by third party companies.

Other projects and schemes

Day-to-day use
We are proud that the whole department provides its services through the Welsh language and we believe that the ability to work day-to-day through the medium of Welsh has been a great help in attracting and appointing new staff. We have evidence that this culture has built the confidence of many of our new staff and strengthened their use of the language.

Audit Wales
Officers from the department hold meetings in Welsh only with Audit Wales staff. We believe this has given Audit Wales the impetus to strengthen their Welsh language arrangements and we believe this has been an opportunity for Audit Wales staff to develop their Welsh as well and make greater use of it.

Training
Cyngor Gwynedd's Finance Department is one of those rare employers offering professional training in finance and information technology through Welsh. We offer Welsh language placements for Apprentices and Trainees in the Accountancy Service, Taxation and Benefits Services, Pension Service and Digital Services. In addition to

trainees and apprentices who had been appointed in previous years, we have appointed two new trainees and four apprentices in 2025 who will work through Welsh.

Organisation Management System
During 2025 we have prepared a detailed specification for the introduction of a new HR and Payroll system for the Council. The specification contains linguistic requirements that promote the Welsh language beyond compliance with the standards. The procurement procedure is currently taking place.

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

We believe that the services we provide to the public in the financial areas (e.g. taxation, benefits) are fully bilingual, including the literature and forms we provide. However, we are aware that things are changing very rapidly in the benefits area in relation to collaborating with bodies from outside the Council and we will continue to be vigilant to ensure that the standards are upheld.

In terms of digital matters, it is seen in part 1 above that this is an ever-evolving area and in setting up new systems as needed we will act to ensure compliance with our expectations.

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?

As a department, we are looking for every opportunity to be innovative and to use technology to promote the Welsh language.

The Digital Plan sets out the need to include the Welsh language in any digital provision, but the digital market is not always supportive of the provision of bilingual systems.

It was reported last year that Microsoft's long-awaited full product for artificial intelligence (Copilot) did not include Welsh as a supported language, and as a result, opportunities to divert tasks such as preparing minutes through this medium are being lost for meetings held in Welsh. The provision has now been significantly strengthened, and we are currently piloting Copilot through Welsh.

As a result of a partnership between Cyngor Gwynedd and Cisco, a global technology company, the Council's new telephone system is provided on a multilingual platform (including Welsh) and this is now available to any user worldwide.

Another innovative development is the Pension Service's use of artificial intelligence technology to read pension account information online to members of the fund using an avatar that goes through the information in detail. This transforms the way the information is presented and is a much better experience for the user than looking at figures in a formal statement.

A video can be seen here which gives an example for John Smith, of a fictitious member of the fund: https://youtu.be/7rSY-D_YM2k

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

The majority of services offered by the Department relate to supporting other Council departments and supporting them to provide services to the rest of the Council.

However, the department is able to influence the services we offer and support the Welsh language through the Council.

Digital Services
All corporately delivered laptops are provided with the operating system set up in Welsh. Further statistics will be collected to check the number who choose to continue with the Welsh setting or proceed to change it to English.

The laptops provided by the Digital Learning Service are provided with the operating platform in Welsh, but no installation has been provided for measuring if the setting is changed. Developmental work is underway with the HWB team in Welsh Government to enable a means of reporting into the future.

Gwynedd Pension Fund
We have introduced a new self-service system to the pension fund in April 2024. The Gwynedd Pension Fund was the first fund in Wales to upgrade to the new site, and we had to work with the company to develop a Welsh language version of the site. This was a significant process, but now the site is being used nationally as other funds make the upgrade.

The site is currently being used by Powys Pension Fund, Torfaen Pension Fund, Swansea Pension Fund, and Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund. We are continuing to develop the system, with the aim of introducing additional elements over the coming months. The remaining Welsh pension funds are also expected to transfer to the new site during this period.

Pension Service officers have also provided a dictionary of Welsh terms to the Local Government Association and HMRC for wider use.

5. What are your staff's language skills?

The latest Language Designations report was provided on 1 October 2025, using data as at that date. The report notes that 218 Finance Department staff have completed a language self-assessment, which is 96.9% of the workforce. There are 7 members of staff who haven't submitted a self-assessment on that day – these are all new staff and we will be following up during the first weeks of their employment.

Of the 218 who have submitted a self-assessment, 99.1%, which is 216 reached their job language designation. In other words, only two members of staff have concluded that they do not meet their job designation but we maintain support for these officers to support them to improve their language skills.

One of these officers is currently following weekly Welsh learning lessons at Foundation level. The job requires an Intermediate level, so the individual is about one level lower than the job requires.

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

Gwynedd Pension Fund
The Pension Fund attended this year's National Eisteddfod in Wrexham, with a stall on the field to promote the fund and the benefits available to our members. The stall was a collaboration with the Clwyd Pension Fund, an organisation where most of the staff are non-Welsh.

Our staff were pleased to support Clwyd staff by welcoming and responding to their members' queries in Welsh. There was a positive response from members of the fund and Clwyd staff alike, with the linguistic support being greatly appreciated.

Members were pleased to see the Pension Fund present at the Eisteddfod, and we hope that we have reached individuals who would not normally come into contact with us through the traditional channels.

Apprenticeship and Trainees Scheme
As a department we are now employing a number of Apprentices and Trainees in various areas including Information Technology, Accountancy, Pensions, Taxation and Benefits, with new Apprentices and Trainees starting with the department during the summer. They all work through the medium of Welsh.

Following the success of the scheme, Tomos Mabon Pritchard, an Accountancy Apprentice was invited to represent the Council on a panel at the Welsh Language Commissioner's Conference in Cardiff about the use of Welsh in the workplace. Tomos gave his perspective as he is an Apprentice at Cyngor Gwynedd who works through the medium of Welsh, as it

was a different experience to that of others at the conference. He had the opportunity to speak and to praise the opportunity to be able to use Welsh in the workplace and the importance of that.

Income Service
The instructions for customers on the debit and credit card payment acceptance system "Call-secure" which went live in September 2024 are available bilingually. The Unit worked with the suppliers, Access Paysuite, along with the Council's Translation Unit to prepare the scripts in Welsh.

However, it is not currently possible for the Council to use an "Open Banking" payment acceptance module (again from Access Paysuite) because some elements of the procedure are not available in Welsh, which is an example of 3rd party suppliers not being able to meet the requirements at this time.

The Departments report to the Language Committee in 2024: Report of the Finance Department.pdf