

Finance Department report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Policy and its contribution towards achieving the Welsh Language Strategy 2023–2033.

Date	5 October 2026
Title	Welsh Language Promotion Plan – Finance Department
Purpose	To present information on the Finance Department's contribution to promoting and supporting 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 Welsh language strategy? Please identify the priority area (early years, learning, work and services, community, or research and technology).

We wish to note that this Report covers the activities of the Finance Department and the Information Technology Services. However, since April of this year, the Information Technology has transferred to Corporate Services Department as part of changes to the Council's organisational structure.

Projects within the Council's Plan

Through the implementation of projects within the Digital Plan, the Department seeks to ensure that the Welsh language is considered an integral part of new technological developments. During 2025/26, work progressed on a number of strategic digital projects, including the redesign of the Council's corporate website, the implementation of a new Human Resources and Payroll system (iTrent), the development of the use of the Microsoft 365 platform, and the evaluation of artificial intelligence tools such as Microsoft Copilot. These projects provided opportunities to ensure that Welsh language requirements were embedded from the outset in new digital systems, services and platforms.

In addition, the Department continued to develop the Council's digital infrastructure and services, including upgrading communication systems, strengthening cyber resilience, developing data management arrangements and introducing new technologies. Throughout this work, ongoing consideration was given to the Welsh language to ensure that digital services are accessible and enable staff and residents to use Welsh naturally and with ease.

Artificial Intelligence (Copilot). Priority area: Research and Technology; Work and Services

During 2025/26, an assessment of the suitability of Microsoft Copilot was completed and a programme of work for the next stages was developed. The Department recognises the

importance of ensuring that new artificial intelligence technologies support the Welsh language and increase opportunities for staff to use Welsh in their daily work. This reflects the Department's broader principle of embedding language requirements in new digital developments from the outset.

Other Projects and Plans

Day-to-Day Use. Priority area: Work and Services

We are proud to note that the entire Finance Department operates daily through the medium of Welsh. We believe that this culture has contributed significantly to our ability to attract and appoint new staff, creating a workplace where Welsh is the natural language of work. There is evidence that this has increased the confidence of new staff to use Welsh in their day-to-day duties and has strengthened their language skills over time.

Audit Wales. Priority area: Work and Services

Meetings and discussions between Department officers and officers of Audit Wales are conducted through the medium of Welsh. We believe that this has contributed to strengthening Welsh language arrangements within Audit Wales and has provided valuable opportunities for their staff to develop their language skills and make broader use of Welsh in their professional work.

Training. Priority areas: Learning; Work and Services

Cyngor Gwynedd's Finance Department is one of the few employers offering professional training in finance and digital technology through the medium of Welsh. We provide Welsh-medium placements for Apprentices and Trainees within the Accounting Service, Taxation and Benefits Services, the Pension Service and Digital Services.

In addition to trainees and apprentices appointed in previous years, new trainees and new apprentices were appointed in 2026, who will develop their careers through the medium of Welsh. This contributes to nurturing the next generation of Welsh-speaking professionals.

Organisation Management System. Priority areas: Research and Technology; Work and Services

A comprehensive specification was developed in 2025 for the implementation of the Council's new Human Resources and Payroll system (iTrent). The specification included specific language requirements to ensure that Welsh would be an integral part of the user experience, going beyond basic compliance with Welsh Language Standards. Following a successful procurement process, the project is progressing with Welsh remaining a central consideration in the development and implementation of the system.

Council Tax System. Priority areas: Research and Technology; Work and Services

Alongside the iTrent system, the Department is also implementing a GovTech system to support the Taxation Unit. Close collaboration has taken place between the Department and GovTech during the development and implementation of the system. Through our

influence as an active user, we have continued to emphasise the importance of ensuring that Welsh is considered from the earliest design and development stages. This has included encouraging the development of Welsh-language interfaces, bilingual templates and improved practices for supporting Welsh-speaking users.

This work contributes to normalising the use of Welsh in specialist digital systems and ensures that technology used by local authorities enables the delivery of high-quality Welsh-language services to residents of our county.

New Ledger System. Priority areas: Research and Technology; Work and Services

Over the coming months, we will be making preparations to introduce a new ledger system, as the current system is reaching the end of its useful life. The new system will be provided by the supplier of our current ledger system; a detailed specification will be prepared for the new system, including specific linguistic requirements aimed at promoting the Welsh language beyond the statutory requirements of the Language Standards. This includes considerations regarding reports, training, and documentation. Initial discussions are already underway, with the aim of ensuring that the Welsh language is embedded in the system from the outset.

Digital Learning Service. Priority areas: Learning; Research and Technology

The Digital Learning Service continues to support Gwynedd schools in developing and using digital technology to support teaching and learning. During 2025/26, the service led and supported a number of digital projects in schools, including the rollout of new systems, the development of arrangements for digital examinations and improvements to the technological provision available to staff and pupils. The service supports thousands of digital devices in schools across the county, helping to ensure that pupils and teachers can benefit from modern technology on a daily basis.

When planning and implementing these developments, consideration is given to the Welsh language to ensure that digital technology supports Welsh-medium learning experiences and increases opportunities to use Welsh in digital educational environments.

Embedding Welsh in Digital Projects. Priority areas: Research and Technology; Work and Services

The Department has adopted a clear principle that Welsh language requirements are an integral part of every new digital project. This applies to work such as systems development, digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, and other technological solutions, ensuring that new technology strengthens the use of Welsh rather than creating barriers to its use.

The Department's contribution therefore focuses primarily on the priority areas of Learning, Work and Service, and Research and Technology.

2. What else requires attention over the next year in order to raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh?

We believe that the financial services provided by the Department to the public, such as council tax and benefits services, are currently available in full through both Welsh and English, including forms, correspondence, information materials and customer support. Nevertheless, continued attention will be required over the coming year to ensure that this provision is maintained and further developed as services and systems evolve.

In particular, given the ongoing changes within the benefits sector and the need to work closely with external bodies and suppliers, it will be important to monitor and influence new arrangements to ensure that the needs of the Welsh language are considered from the outset. This will include ensuring that digital systems, online forms, correspondence and support services enable residents to use Welsh naturally and conveniently.

In addition, as new systems are implemented and procured within the Department, it will be necessary to continue setting clear Welsh Language requirements that go beyond compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, to increase opportunities for staff and the public to use Welsh in their day-to-day activities. This will contribute to raising the status of Welsh as both a working language and a service language within the fields of finance and digital services. Recent feedback relating to automated emails generated by Departmental systems has highlighted the importance of ensuring that Welsh is fully embedded in every aspect of our digital systems. We will therefore continue to work with suppliers and system developers to ensure that automated communications meet the expectations of both the Council and service users.

The Department is also reviewing how consideration is given to the Welsh language when developing policies, making decisions and planning services, including in areas such as the budget-setting process following correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner. We will use any feedback received to further strengthen our arrangements and to ensure that the impact of decisions on the Welsh language is appropriately assessed and considered. We believe that this work will help to further raise the status of Welsh and increase opportunities for its use both within the Council and in the delivery of services to the public.

Finally, the Department will support the Welsh Language Commissioner's pilot project to measure Welsh language use in the workplace via a staff questionnaire. Cyngor Gwynedd is a member of the Commissioner's advisory group on increasing Welsh language use in workplaces, and this pilot offers a valuable opportunity to gain a better understanding of how staff use Welsh in their day-to-day work. The survey results will help identify strengths and areas for development, informing future steps to increase Welsh language use and create more opportunities for staff to use the language naturally in the workplace.

3. Has technological development hindered your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh? If applicable, please provide an example. How do you ensure that technological development does not affect your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh?

In general, we do not believe that technological developments have significantly hindered the Finance Department's ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh. Most of our systems and digital services support bilingual provision, and we recognise the importance

of ensuring that Welsh language requirements are incorporated from the outset when developing, procuring or updating technology.

However, challenges do arise from time to time, particularly in relation to systems provided or managed by external organisations and suppliers. For example, recent feedback highlighted that some automated emails generated by Departmental systems did not include Welsh content. Similarly, national or third-party systems used within the areas of taxation, benefits and corporate resources can sometimes limit how quickly full Welsh-language provision can be implemented.

To mitigate these risks, the Department adopts a proactive approach by incorporating specific language requirements into procurement specifications and contracts. As mentioned earlier, this was done when procuring the iTrent system, where the focus was on making sure Welsh was built into the systems from the start and not added on afterwards. The Department also works closely with suppliers like GovTech and other providers to make sure opportunities to use Welsh are maintained and developed.

We will continue to monitor the impact of new technology on the use of Welsh, respond to user feedback, and ensure that technological developments contribute to increasing the use of Welsh rather than creating barriers to its use. We believe this is essential to ensuring that Welsh remains a natural language for service delivery and for day-to-day work within the Department.

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

The majority of the Finance Department's services are internal support services and, as such, we do not maintain a central record of the number of customers who access services through the medium of Welsh across all areas of the Department.

However, where systems allow, we monitor and promote the use of Welsh-language services. A good example of this is Gwynedd Pension Fund. A new self-service system for Fund members was introduced in April 2024. Gwynedd Pension Fund was the first pension fund in Wales to upgrade to the new platform, and close collaboration with the supplier was required to develop a fully Welsh-language version of the site. This was a significant development, ensuring that members were able to access and use the service in Welsh from the outset. The Pensions Service is also proud of the contribution it made to establishing a bilingual self-service system, which provided the foundation for Welsh-language provision that has since been adopted across all Local Government Pension Funds in Wales.

The success of this work has led to the same solution being adopted by all eight Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds in Wales, providing members across the country with a consistent and bilingual experience. This development has made a significant contribution to increasing the use of Welsh within pensions administration and has provided a successful model that other organisations can follow.

The Fund also continues to lead on Welsh-medium digital developments. The Pensions Service is currently working closely with its supplier to develop Welsh-language versions of four new interactive personalised videos for members. These will provide clear and engaging information on important topics such as an introduction to the Fund for new staff, planning for retirement, Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs), and the options available to members when preparing for retirement. The aim is to ensure that members can access complex information about their pension in a way that is easy to understand, accessible and fully bilingual.

In addition to this work, Gwynedd Pension Fund has collaborated with the Local Government Association to develop bilingual resources to promote the Local Government Pension Scheme. This has included producing information videos and a range of promotional materials that employers can use to raise awareness of the value of the pension scheme among their employees and support improved member engagement. These resources have helped to ensure that information about the scheme is equally available in Welsh and English, supporting wider efforts to increase participation and awareness of the benefits of the LGPS across Wales.

Furthermore, officers from the Pensions Service have contributed to the development of a glossary of Welsh pension terminology in collaboration with the Local Government Association and other partners. This supports the wider use of Welsh within the pensions sector and helps to ensure linguistic consistency across pension services in Wales.

As more services move to digital platforms, the Department will continue to explore opportunities to collect and analyse information on the use of Welsh-language services in order to understand demand, measure usage and support the further development of Welsh-language provision.

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

As the Information Technology Service has transferred to the Corporate Services Department, the response to this question is presented separately for the Finance Department and the Information Technology Service.

Finance

The Finance Department continues to have a workforce with strong Welsh language skills. By the end of September 2026, all staff (100%) had completed a language self-assessment.

Of the 144 staff members who completed the assessment, all (100%) met the Welsh language requirements of their posts. This demonstrates the Department's success in recruiting and developing a workforce with the Welsh language skills necessary to fulfil the requirements of their roles and deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

According to the self-assessment data, 94 members of staff reported Welsh language skills at Proficiency level, 44 at Advanced level and 6 at Intermediate level. No members of staff were assessed at Foundation or Entry level, and no members of staff reported having no Welsh language skills. This means that almost all members of staff possess Advanced or Proficient Welsh language skills.

The completion rate is among the highest within the Council, placing the Department amongst the strongest-performing services in this regard. In addition, one member of staff has enrolled on a Welsh Language Refresher course to further develop and refine their language skills, reflecting the Department's ongoing commitment to the linguistic development of its workforce.

These results reflect a strong Welsh-speaking workplace culture within the Department and ensure that we are well placed to continue providing high-quality services through the medium of Welsh.

Information Technology

The Information Technology Service also benefits from a workforce with strong Welsh language skills. All 73 members of staff (100%) had completed their language skills self-assessment.

Seventy-one members of staff (97.3%) met the Welsh language requirements of their posts. Of the two staff members who do not yet meet the language requirements of their posts, one is currently undertaking Welsh language training to further develop their language skills.

According to the self-assessment data, 45 members of staff reported Welsh language skills at Proficiency level, 25 at Advanced level, one at Intermediate level and two at Foundation level. No members of staff were assessed at Entry level and no members of staff reported having no Welsh language skills.

These results demonstrate that the vast majority of the Service's workforce possess Advanced or Proficient Welsh language skills and reflect the Service's ongoing commitment to maintaining and developing its ability to provide bilingual services and technical support.

6. Please provide examples of any barriers, complaints and compliments relating to the provision and promotion of Welsh-medium services:

Barriers

The main barriers experienced by the Department relate to systems and software provided by external suppliers. Although the Council sets clear Welsh language requirements when procuring new systems, not all solutions are fully available through the medium of Welsh from the outset. As a result, the Department has had to work closely with suppliers to develop or improve Welsh-language provision within certain systems.

Challenges also arise from time to time when implementing national changes in areas such as benefits and taxation, where the Council is dependent on externally developed systems and guidance. The Department continues to influence partners and suppliers to ensure that the needs of Welsh-speaking users are properly considered.

Complaints

During the year, feedback was received regarding automated emails generated by one of the Department's systems that did not contain Welsh-language content. Following this, the issue was brought to the supplier's attention to ensure that Welsh language requirements are taken into account when developing and configuring systems in the future.

A small number of complaints were also received during the year in relation to Welsh-language correspondence. These included instances where correspondence received in Welsh was responded to in English only. These cases were investigated promptly and were found to have arisen either from individual errors or limitations within specific systems, rather than from any lack of commitment to the Welsh language.

In response, staff were reminded of the existing arrangements for handling bilingual and Welsh-language correspondence, and system-related issues were raised with the relevant suppliers to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the Council's Welsh Language Policy. The Department continues to monitor the situation and take action on any issues that arise in order to maintain a high standard of Welsh-medium service.

The Department has also received correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner in relation to aspects of the budget-setting process. Although the matter is subject to corporate consideration, the Department welcomes the opportunity to review its arrangements and strengthen the way in which the Welsh language is considered when developing policies, assessing impacts and making decisions.

Compliments

The Department is proud to have received positive feedback regarding its commitment to promoting and normalising the use of Welsh in the workplace, together with the natural and extensive use of Welsh within the workplace and in its dealings with partner organisations. A clear example of this was the contribution made by Tomos Mabon Pritchard, Finance Apprentice, who participated in a panel discussion at the Welsh Language Commissioner's Learning, Developing and Using Welsh Conference, where he

shared his experiences of working in an environment that operates naturally through the medium of Welsh.

The Pension Fund also continues to lead on Welsh-medium digital developments. The Pensions Service is currently working closely with its supplier to develop Welsh-language versions of four new interactive personalised videos for members. These will provide clear and engaging information on important topics such as an introduction to the Fund for new staff, planning for retirement, Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs), and the options available to members when preparing for retirement. The aim is to ensure that members can access complex information about their pension in a way that is easy to understand, accessible and fully bilingual.

In addition to this work, the Gwynedd Pension Fund has collaborated with the Local Government Association to develop bilingual resources to promote the Local Government Pension Scheme. This has included producing information videos and a range of promotional materials that employers can use to raise awareness of the value of the pension scheme among their employees and support improved member engagement. These resources have helped to ensure that information about the scheme is equally available in Welsh and English, supporting wider efforts to increase participation and awareness of the benefits of the Local Government Pension Scheme across Wales.

Furthermore, officers from the Pensions Service have contributed to the development of a glossary of Welsh pension terminology in collaboration with the Local Government Association and other partners. This supports the wider use of Welsh within the pensions sector and helps to ensure linguistic consistency across pension services in Wales.

The practices of the Payroll Unit also reflect a strong commitment to providing bilingual services. Records for new employees are set up with Welsh as the preferred language within the system, and all initial correspondence relating to the commencement of employment, including forms and requests for information, is provided bilingually. Payslips are available to staff in Welsh or English according to their personal preference, and the Unit has reviewed its employment letters to ensure that they are available in both languages. These arrangements have contributed to providing a consistent and accessible service for Welsh-speaking users, and no complaints were received regarding the Unit's use of Welsh during the reporting period.

In addition, the provision of Welsh-medium training and apprenticeship opportunities within the Department continues to support the development of a professional workforce capable of working and delivering services through the medium of Welsh, thereby contributing to the promotion of the language within the fields of finance and digital services.

Overall, experience has shown that the majority of issues that arise relate to limitations within external systems rather than a lack of use of Welsh within the Department itself. One example is the Open Banking module provided by Access Paysuite, which the Council has not yet been able to implement because not all elements of the process are available in Welsh. Nevertheless, we continue to work proactively to ensure that Welsh is embedded in every aspect of our services.

The departments report to the Language Committee in 2025: [Welsh Language Promotion Plan - Finance Department.pdf](#)