

APPENDIX 1 – Policy PS 1 'The Welsh Language and Culture' from the Joint Local Development Plan

THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

6.1.1 Background

- National planning policy advises that local planning authorities should consider whether they have communities where the use of the Welsh language is part of the social fabric, and if so, it is considered appropriate to take that into account when creating land use policies.
- Promoting the Welsh language and culture is one of the principles central to the Single Integrated Plan.

Introduction

- 6.1.2 The Welsh language plays an important role in the social, cultural and economic life of residents and visitors of the Plan area. In 2001, 60% and 69% of the population of Anglesey and Gwynedd (County) were Welsh-speakers. Use of the language varies from place to place in the area. The first volume of information on the Welsh language from the 2011 Census shows lower levels of Welsh-speakers in both Counties: 57% and 65% in Anglesey and Gwynedd, respectively.
- 6.1.3 Where development is proposed, consideration must be given to improving and preserving the language and culture. Maintaining existing communities is key to this. The Plan, together with national planning policy and guidance proposes a number of policies that, while they do not specifically mention the Welsh language, in conjunction with partner initiatives, will have a positive impact. The strategy recognises that a high percentage of the current population lives in rural settlements and therefore supports both rural and urban communities.
- 6.1.4 The need to promote healthy local economies is likely to be very important to sustain communities and strengthen the language. This way provides opportunities for people to stay within the Plan area rather than going elsewhere to look for work. The Plan includes a series of policies that will further this objective, encouraging economic opportunities close to where people live that will have a positive impact on the vitality of the community and the Welsh language. In addition to that, any retail, industrial or commercial development is expected to demonstrate an understanding of the linguistic make-up of the area in which they are applying for planning permission and recognition of the status of the Welsh language as an official language in Wales. There should be a demonstrated commitment to treating Welsh and English equally. Policies will help to ensure that the right level and the right type of demand for homes is addressed and that when development takes place enables it to happen without significant disruption to the character of the community. In addition, policies will aim to retain existing community facilities and promote alternative or new facilities, if appropriate. A Supplementary Planning Guidance will reinforce policies by providing guidance about the type of information or assessment that will be necessary at the time of a planning application to enable assessment of the impact, any potential damage, and the potential need for mitigation and/or measures to promote positive impacts.
- 6.1.5 Strategic Policy PS 1 sets the context for assessing the impact that proposals may have on the language and culture, and also provides information as to the scale and location of a new development as intended within the settlement strategy.

STRATEGIC POLICY PS 1: THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Councils will promote and support the use of the Welsh language in the Plan area. This will be achieved by:

1. **Requiring a Welsh Language Statement which will indicate how a proposed development will protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language, where the proposed development falls within one of the following categories:**
 - a. **Retail, industrial or commercial development which employs more than 50 employees and/or has a floor area of at least 1,000 m sq.; or**
 - b. **Residential development which will either itself or accumulatively provide more than the indicative housing provision set for the settlement in Policy TAI 1 - TAI 6; or**
 - c. **Residential development of 5 or more housing units on allocated or windfall sites within development boundaries that does not address evidence of need and demand for housing recorded in a Housing Market Assessment and other relevant local sources of evidence.**
2. **Requiring a Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which will set out how the proposed development will protect, promote and enhance the Welsh Language, where the proposed development is on an unexpected windfall site for a large-scale housing development or large-scale employment development that would lead to a significant workforce influx;**
3. **Refusing proposals which would cause significant harm to the character and language balance of a community that cannot be avoided or suitably mitigated by appropriate planning mechanisms;**
4. **Requiring a bilingual Signage Scheme to deal with all operational signage in the public domain that are proposed in a planning application by public bodies and by commercial and business companies;**
5. **Setting an expectation that Welsh names are used for new developments, house and street names.**

Explanation:

- 6.1.6 It is intended that all measures broadly described in the paragraphs ahead of this Policy will support communities and the Welsh language. The Plan's key objectives demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of balanced, sustainable and distinctive communities. This means that the Plan includes policy tools to allow local communities to change and grow sustainably and to address the needs of all members of society. There are a number of strategic and detailed policies that will provide an explanation about how development proposals will be managed. On the whole the Sustainability Assessment (that was enlightened by the Language Impact Assessment) takes a positive view of the Plan's policies and proposals on the grounds that the development takes place on an appropriate scale and in appropriate places and includes measures to promote the positive impacts and measures to mitigate negative impacts.
- 6.1.7 As evidenced by criterion 1 and 2 in Policy PS 1, in order to make an informed decision at the time of a planning application information is sought about applications where a development may occur, should it be granted planning permission, at a pace or scale different from what was envisaged at the time of preparing the Plan. Policy PS1 reinforces other relevant policies in the Plan which describe the assumptions made, e.g. the housing growth level per settlement (Policies TAI 1 - TAI 6); that the housing development provides an appropriate choice of market housing and affordable housing (Policy TAI 8). If there is uncertainty, pre-application advice should be sought from the Local Planning Authority to see if a Statement or Assessment is required. Having signs in Welsh and English, and Welsh place and property names are a clear indication of the character of the area, including its linguistic character. The 'Maintaining

and creating distinctive and sustainable communities' and 'Type And Mix Of Housing' Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will be published to provide further guidance on the matter. They will explain the type and location of development that is likely to be acceptable in the Plan area, explaining the planning considerations that apply. The 'Creating and Maintaining Distinctive and Sustainable Communities' SPG will describe the signage expected to be bilingual, e.g. public information signs, advertisements, display advertisements. The Statement or report on the Assessment will allow the developer to explain the application in more detail and to consider the possible positive and negative impacts on the community and its linguistic balance. The SPGs, for example, will look for evidence that the proposal has been discussed with Community, City and Town Councils and local community groups to obtain information and ask for their opinion, and that consideration has been given to surveys about the local housing market, and/ or the labour market. In addition, they will refer the applicant to such assistance as is available from the Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner about designing bilingual signage and marketing material, the advice that is available to the private sector by the Welsh Government/Business Wales regarding bilingualism.