



**WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT TO THE
WELSH LANGUAGE BOARD**

June 2008

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1 Introduction

1.1 Denbighshire County Council's revised Welsh Language Scheme was

approved on the 31 March 2006 and this is the second Annual Monitoring Report to be presented to the Welsh Language Board. The first Report was presented to the Board in September 2007 and it can be viewed on the County Council's website under 'Welsh Language Scheme'.

- 1.2 The purpose of this Monitoring Report is to outline the progress made by the Council during the period 1 April 2007 to 30 March 2008 in delivering public services in accordance with our Scheme and identify areas of improvement. It also reflects the comments made by the Board in response to the 2007 Annual Report and also seeks to build upon some of the best practices identified in the Board's Overview Report on all of the Local Authorities in Wales.

2 Monitoring of the Welsh Language Scheme

- 2.1 Corporate responsibility for the Council's Scheme and monitoring Welsh Language matters rests with the Strategic Policy Unit which sits in the Resources Directorate. Monitoring of the Scheme and liaison with the Welsh Language Board and external groups in respect of Welsh Language issues is the responsibility of the Strategic Policy Officer supported by the Strategic Policy Unit.
- 2.2 Executive responsibility for the Welsh Language Scheme strategically rests directly with the Chief Executive who takes an active and robust interest in our delivery of services through the Welsh language.
- 2.3 Although this Report concentrates on the Council's activities between April 2007 and March 2008 it is prudent to note that following the Council elections in May 2008 the Leader of the Council has taken specific responsibility for the Welsh Language in his portfolio.
- 2.4 The proactive role of the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council underpins the importance attached to our Welsh Language Scheme and the championing of the Welsh Language within the Authority.
- 2.5 The Bilingual Working Group consisting of Members and Officers has been established in 2007 to specifically monitor the Scheme and promote the Welsh Language in all aspects of the Council's services. Reports on specific issues will also go through our Scrutiny Committees.

3 Mainstreaming the Welsh Language

- 3.1 The Council has an Integrated Impact Assessment Tool for screening new strategies and revising existing ones. The Tool has a specific question relating to the Welsh Language namely 'Does your Strategy or Plan support the Welsh Language'. Language matters in respect of risks and opportunities are identified at an early stage of a plan's development and addressed accordingly.
- 3.2 The Welsh Language Board's guidance on 'Mainstreaming the Welsh

Language' has provided a basis for introducing measures to ensure that our strategic plans in particular are assessed and monitored. Following a successful seminar arranged nationally by the Board and attended by Economic Regeneration Officers we are undertaking an assessment of new procedures governing mainstreaming arrangements for grant schemes and the introduction of information technology.

- 3.3 Our mainstreaming of the Welsh Language has resulted in many of our Directorates now having specific details in respect of the individual's preferred choice of language e.g. Council Tax and our commitment to ensuring that third parties also have due regard to our Welsh Language scheme.
- 3.4 In order to monitor the number of Welsh Speakers who use our services we are developing an Equalities Monitoring Form with specific questions relating to the service users ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh. This Form is currently being trialled within specific areas of the Council.
- 3.5 As we are using more internet based services this obviously creates more challenges to ensure our services are all accessible through the Welsh language. We have specific policies in place to ensure our website is totally bilingual and on-line services are available through the medium of Welsh. Our Internet Electoral Registration Service for example is accessible in Welsh and English and a new Text Service is being developed bilingually.

4. Promotion of the Welsh Language

- 4.1 The Bilingual Members Working Group which has previously met twice a year has now requested quarterly meetings in order that it can play a more proactive role in monitoring our delivery of services through the medium of Welsh. It receives reports and presentation from Officers and its recommendations and comments are sought before issues affecting the Welsh Language are deliberated by Cabinet or Full Council.
- 4.2 The Council's Corporate Customer Services Centre has a dedicated Welsh Language contact number for all enquiries in accordance with Denbighshire's commitment to bilingualism. For all calls relating to Highways, Environmental Services, Council House maintenance, job application forms, etc calls can be made to a dedicated number with a Welsh speaking advisor. Both Welsh and English contact numbers are used in all our promotional material. We do monitor the number of calls received by both contact numbers. The periods in the table below are from April 2007 to March 2008.

Dedicated Welsh telephone contact number	4,523	(6.80%)
Dedicated English telephone contact number	61,962	(93.20%)

- 4.3 Over a two week period in November 2007 we undertook sample equalities monitoring of our service users. The services involved included our reception areas, Customer Service Centre and Cash Offices. Two questions asked related to the person's national identity and their preferred language of communication.

Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form – What do you consider your national identity to be?	No	%
Welsh	108	45.00%
British	66	27.50%
English	53	22.08%
Scottish	7	2.92%
Irish	4	1.66%
Northern Irish	1	0.42%
other	1	0.42%
Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form – What is your preferred language for communication?	No	%
English	204	89.08%
Welsh	25	10.92%
Other	0	0%

Last year the Council in-conjunction with the Board launched a campaign to highlight the availability of a dedicated Welsh telephone number through posters, advertising and 'pop-up' displays in Council reception areas. It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of this campaign as other initiatives were also undertaken at the same time e.g. the campaign coincided with the introduction of our new refuse collection service with bilingual notices and advertising.

We are in the process of introducing bilingual 'business cards' to our frontline services to distribute to the public who have service issues e.g. our refuse collection service. The 'business' card will have a bilingual message highlighting the existence of the Corporate Customer Services Centre and the availability of a dedicated Welsh language telephone line, website and e-mail address.

- 4.4 New members of staff and Elected Members are given induction

training which incorporates an introduction to our Welsh Language Scheme and the importance of providing a bilingual service to the public.

- 4.5 All members of staff are encouraged to participate in Welsh classes which are open to all staff regardless of their role within the Authority. Following representation from staff who felt an hour's lesson once a week was insufficient and lacked momentum a new intensive course has now been established (a 3 hour course, twice a week for 10 weeks) subject to demand.
- 4.6 The Council recognises the important role Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych plays in promoting the Welsh Language in the local community and it is our intention to develop further our partnership work with Menter Iaith. The Council makes an annual financial contribution to Menter Iaith of £10k which is used to fund the work of a Menter Iaith Development Officer post. Following representation from Menter Iaith it has been agreed that the annual sum will be guaranteed for three years and then subject to further three yearly renewals. This change in the funding arrangement allows Menter Iaith to programme its work beyond the current 12 months and allows security of post to the Development Worker.
The Council has also agreed to the £10k being subject to an annual inflationary increase.
- 4.7 The Council also makes a financial contribution to the North Wales Bilingual Forum in the sum of £2,500 per annum. The Forum's primary objective is to promote bilingualism in every part of society across North Wales.
- 4.8 Menter Iaith is currently undertaking a comprehensive 'mystery shopper exercise' on our behalf which involves 'testing' our responses to various forms of communication. Menter Iaith are currently preparing a report on its findings to the Council and its results will be shared with the Welsh Language Board. The review of our front-line services in relation to the Welsh Language will include our telephone response, postal and e-mail correspondence, face to face services and visual bilingualism in Council reception areas and printing and electronic material.
A draft report had been received identifying good practice in some Services and areas of weakness in others.
Following an analysis of the results of this exercise an action plan will be developed in order to improve our Welsh Language service and where there are areas of good practice to roll these out corporately.

5. Translation Services

- 5.1 Although the Council has one internal translator, due to the increasing amount of translation work required a substantial amount of work is done by external translators all of whom are members of Cymdeithas Cyfiethwyr Cymru (Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters)

- 5.2 All public meetings have the services of a simultaneous translation service from the Welsh into the English.
- 5.3 The Council is currently undertaking a review of our translation service in order to quantify its cost and efficiency. The review will look at all aspects of our translation service, both internally and externally with a view to recommendations being made to ensure we provide a professional service in a cost effective manner and ensuring compliance with procurement requirements whilst meeting the demands of tight deadlines and commitments already enshrined in our Welsh Language Scheme.
The outcome of the review will be shared with our Members' Bilingual Forum before recommendations go to our Cabinet.

6. Staff, recruitment and bilingual skills

- 6.1 Our Central Personnel Department provides the necessary arrangements for providing and assessing the language requirements of staff and Elected Members. This responsibility also includes the organisation of Welsh Language Courses and the monitoring of staff bilingual skills.
- 6.2 Workforce Planning
We have recently introduced a 'Workforce Planning' process which will greatly assist Managers in ensuring that we manage our bilingual skills. Workforce Development Planning is about analysing our current workforce, and then extending that analysis to identify the future numbers, skills and competencies needed to deliver improved services. Any gaps in the current work force, which prevent achieving the aspired future service delivery, can then be identified and a plan put in place to fill the workforce deficiencies.
The Workforce Planning process specifically looks at the needs of each Service in relation to the language skills of their staff. Managers follow the template below:

Welsh Language Profile - What is the Welsh language competency within the service area? What and how many job posts are Welsh essential? Will this change in the future?

Welsh Language Ability	Speak	Listen	Read	Write
No. of staff who can > (fluent or moderate skill)				

No. of Welsh Essential Posts	
No. of Welsh Speakers in Team	
Job Titles of Welsh Essential Posts	

Senior Management regularly assess the need for posts to be

designated 'Welsh Essential' if a vacancy arises or a new post is created. Managers will also assess the balance of bilingual staff within their Service and give preference to a Welsh speaker if an imbalance needs addressing. The Workforce Planning process has already proved beneficial in identifying 'teams' which require a Welsh speaker in a particular geographic area.

- 6.3 The HR TRENT system is now operational and provides detailed information about the training records and language abilities of staff. Personnel Officers are currently working with other Authorities and specialist HR software companies to ensure that the software procured is compatible to be used bilingually in order that on-line documentation can be accessed through the medium of Welsh i.e. on-line job application forms.
- 6.4 Staff are encouraged to undertake an e-gov learning module for various equality strands including the Welsh Language. The e-gov modules allow staff to undertake training at their own desk at a time suited to them. The e-gov learning modules are also being used by groups of employees.
- 6.5 The Council continues the initiative of having a 'Welsh Learner of the Year' Award. It was pleasing to note that the Welsh Language Board's Overview of Annual Monitoring Reports 2006/07 identified our annual award to a member of staff as a good practice.

7. Risk Assessment by the Welsh Language Board

- 7.1 The Welsh Language Board undertook a Risk Assessment of the Council's management of bilingual skills in April and June 2007. Interviews with several key Officers were held including the Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources.
- 7.2 A report on the Risk Assessment was received by the Council in July 2007 and its recommendations were discussed by senior managers and Elected Members and an action plan put in place to address some of the key weaknesses identified by the Report. The Action Plan and findings of the Risk Assessment were subsequently the focus of a meeting with the Welsh Language Board.
- 7.3 The Risk Assessment Report identified examples of good practice and the need to address some concerns through acting upon the Board's recommendations.
- 7.4 Examples of good practice identified by the Report were:
- the partnership approach with the local college in delivering training and the celebrating of staff development i.e. learner of the year.
 - the Council has built up a long term relationship with local specialist tutors and this provision is monitored for quality through evaluation.

The Report acknowledges the hard work undertaken by the Council to ensure compliance with the Scheme and the steep learning curve for new Officers tasked with familiarising themselves with the Board's monitoring and reporting arrangements.

- 7.5 The Welsh Language Board Risk Assessment also identified potential weaknesses in our delivery of bilingual services and made various recommendations. The Authority has now developed an action plan to implement the recommendations and we report below on our progress against each recommendation.

Recommendation 1:

The Council should ensure that the responsibility for guiding its strategic work programme for staffing issues is clear in accordance with its statutory language scheme. There is currently a high risk that the Council is not complying with its language scheme.

Update

The Council has introduced a Work Force Planning process which corporately ensures that responsibility for managing our bilingual skills is clearly identified.(See 6.2 above Section on Workforce Planning)

Recommendation 2:

The Council should ensure that there is complete and detailed information regarding language on the Trent system, to do so staff resources must be assigned to populate the system.

Update

The new HR TRENT system is now active and includes information on the ability of staff to communicate through the Welsh language both orally and written.

Recommendation 3:

It is necessary to develop a workforce which uses the data for language skills and allocation of posts to inform policy development work with the aim of expanding and improving Welsh-medium services for the public.

Update

This recommendation has been implemented through the comprehensive Workforce Planning System.

Recommendation 4:

Any progress in language skills amongst staff, following training, should be recorded on the corporate system and there needs to be a simple and effective procedure in place to ensure that this is taking place.

Update

All training records and language ability of employees are now being placed

electronically on the TRENT System.

Recommendation 5:

It is necessary to create a clear protocol for managers explaining how to assign and record the language requirements of posts.

Update

This recommendation has been implemented through a new Vacancy Control Form which must be completed by Managers when a vacancy arises. Managers must state that they have reviewed the post's Welsh Language requirements.

Recommendation 6:

Priority should be given to recording information about the bilingual skills of staff and designation of posts on the Trent system and carrying out an analysis of the information to be submitted to the elected Members and to the Welsh Language Board by June 2008. An analysis should lead to the preparation of a language skills strategy, which from its implementation will benefit the Welsh-speaking public.

Update

An analysis of the bilingual skills of the workforce was shared with the Welsh Language Board at a meeting with our Chief Executive and Personnel Department. Regular reports are presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet. The recommendation has been implemented through the establishment of a Corporate Language Skills Strategy (See Appendix 1 on Language Skills Strategy.)

Recommendation 7:

To review the method of recording and using complaints about the Council's Welsh language services to inform the process of making improvements in the service.

Update

A review of our complaints system is currently being undertaken with a new Corporate Complaints Policy to be implemented by April 2009. Issues around the reporting and recording of Welsh Language complaints will be addressed in this Policy.

Recommendation 8:

Specific methods should be sought in order to obtain the opinion of Welsh speakers with regard to the availability and range of the Council's Welsh language services whilst using it to inform the

Council's language skills strategy.

Update

We are currently reviewing the need for a 'consultative' group of representative members of the electorate to be established. This group of hopefully 500 Denbighshire residents will be used to obtain opinions on our delivery of services through the medium of Welsh.

We are also undertaking a 'mystery shopper' exercise detailed elsewhere in this report.

Recommendation 9:

The County should continue to hold campaigns to promote Welsh-medium services and plan for an increase in usage where appropriate.

The Council does seek to promote the existence of Welsh medium services at every opportunity. An example is the introduction of 'business cards' given to front line services (e.g. waste collection service) to distribute with information about our Customer Service Centre and its dedicated Welsh Language telephone number, website and e-mail address.

8.0 Self Assessment – Denbighshire Children and Young People's Partnership. Progress Report.

- 8.1 In our Monitoring Report last year we referred in detail to the Self Assessment that had taken place during the spring of 2007. The Self Assessment proved a valuable exercise which raised several areas which the Partnership could improve upon. In this Report we are reporting on progress and initiatives undertaken.
- 8.2 The Children & Young People's Partnership has adopted the Denbighshire County Council Welsh Language Scheme and complies with it. The Welsh Language is specifically referred to in the Partnership's Governance Arrangements under paragraph 10.1
- 8.3 During 2007, a number of meetings were held between members of the Partnership Support Team and officers from Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych to drive the Self Assessment agenda forward. Menter Iaith now sits on the Partnership's Training & Workforce Development Group.
- 8.4 Menter Iaith officers also played a key role with the Partnership Support Team in organising and delivering the Partnership's Welsh Language Seminar on the 15th of November 2007. This workshop was attended by 19 people in all, representing a variety of different partner organisations. The issues raised were:
- Long standing members of the Partnership felt that there has been significant progress by the Partnership over the past two years

- A number of organisations that operate throughout the United Kingdom do not produce materials in Welsh and this causes difficulties for those wishing to deliver services locally
- Lack of planning often means that translation holds back publication or is perceived as a problem
- Member organisations of the Children & Young People's Partnership are at different levels of development in terms of language awareness and the capacity to deliver services through the medium of Welsh
- It would be helpful for organisations that work with children and young people to have materials in Welsh and a reference guide to delivering services through the medium of Welsh

Those who attended the Workshop felt that it had been highly beneficial and that there was a need for an improvement plan to address Welsh language issues within the Partnership.

8.5 **Progress during 2007/08**

- The Partnership Support Team is in the process of developing packs of Welsh Language materials for Member organisations and reference files to go with those packs.
- Establishing a baseline for Welsh language issues within Partnership organisations would be beneficial. It is intended to take this forward through either the Quality & Evaluation Working Group or the Training & Workshop Development Group.
- There is a need to extend the use of Welsh within the Partnership, and specifically within regular meetings. One aim might be to ensure that Welsh is seen and heard at all regular Partnership meetings.
- The setting of aims, and the plans to meet them, will be encompassed within the Partnership's Welsh Language Improvement Plan. This could be the focus of a further Partnership Workshop.
- There are several strands of work ongoing to improve the use and awareness of Welsh within the Children & Young People's Partnership. These will be drawn together in due course in a Welsh Language Improvement Plan, which will feed into the Children & Young People's Single Plan.

9.0 **Welsh Language Indicator WLI 1 - Contracted Out Services 'That contracts made by the Council with 3rd parties to provide services on its behalf ensure services are provided in accordance with the requirements of our Welsh Language Scheme'.**

- 9.1 Denbighshire's Scheme makes specific reference to third party

contracts and states that any agreement or arrangement will be consistent with our Scheme if they relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales. Our current standard contract for contracts over £100,000 relate to the requirements on our contractors in relation to our Scheme.

We were unable to identify suitable schemes for auditing in Youth Services or pre-school child care services although we have close partnership arrangements with organisations such as Denbighshire's Children's Information Service which operate a fully bilingual service. Although there are no specific contracts in place in these sections there are several service level agreements in place and we intend to undertake further monitoring. For example Youth Services have a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with a section on equalities but not specifically the Welsh Language. This will be addressed.

- 9.2 It was pleasing to note that the Welsh Language Board's Overview of Annual Monitoring Reports 2006/07 identified our Compliance Action Plan as an example of good practice. In our Annual Report last year we identified some areas of weakness in relation to ensuring third party contracts endorsed our Welsh Language Policies. We can now report below on progress made.

9.3 Contracts in elderly care services

In our annual report last year we assessed our Domiciliary Care Framework Agreement, the Care Homes Providing Personal or Nursing Care Framework Agreement and the Draft Tender Document for the delivery of Meals on Wheels. We identified a compliance action plan in order to improve our third party contracts. The compliance plan identified the actions required and a target date for implementation.

Compliance Plan

Contracts	Improvement plan	Completion date	Update June 2008
Framework agreement for providing Domiciliary Care	The clause on Welsh Language will be expanded upon making reference to Denbighshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme. A full copy of the scheme will be appended at the end of the documentation.	This will be included from October 08 when the current agreement expires.	The new Framework Agreement will incorporate a new section relating to the Welsh Language.
Framework agreement for	Draft version of framework, currently	This has been included from 1 st	The Framework

Care Homes providing personal or nursing care	awaiting independent counsel advice; document will be updated so that the Welsh Language clause is expanded upon, making reference to Denbighshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme. A full copy of the scheme will be appended at the end of the documentation.	October 07 when the new contract has commenced.	now includes a section on the Welsh Language.
Tender for Delivery of Meals on Wheels	Draft tender documents will be amended to reflect the requirements of the Denbighshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme	August 07	Tender Documents have been amended with a section on the Welsh Language requirements.

All of our contracts or agreements with third parties in Adult Services refer to our requirements under the Welsh Language Scheme. When a contract is sent out a copy of the Council's Welsh Language Scheme is also sent to the provider. The wording is as follows:

WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY

1. *The Service Provider shall comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 and with the Service Purchaser's Welsh Language Scheme and any updates to it. Details of the Service Purchaser's Welsh language Scheme, its requirements and guidelines as to its implementation, and any updates to the scheme, will be provided by the Service Purchaser.*
2. *The Provider shall make every effort to ensure that the service is provided in the language choice of the Service User. The Provider shall ensure that their employees are able to speak English and/or Welsh.*
3. *The Provider must operate and keep up to date a Welsh language policy*

9.4 Contracts in children and family services

In our annual report last year we assessed the Service Level Agreement with the National Children's Homes and identified a

compliance action plan in order to improve our third party contracts. The compliance plan identified the actions required and a target date for implementation.

Compliance Plan

Contracts	Improvement plan	Completion date	Update June 2008
Service Level agreements for providing Denbighshire's Children Residential Services	The clause on Welsh Language will be expanded upon making reference to Denbighshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme. A full copy of the scheme will be appended at the end of the documentation.	This was included in April 2008 when the current agreement expired.	Completed
Future contracts/tender documents	A draft Contract template for children's services is currently being approved through central procurement and legal services. This contract includes reference to the provision of bi-lingual services. However, it will be amended to include the requirements of Denbighshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme.	September 07	Completed

It is the intention of this Contract that wherever possible the service user is able to access the services provided in the language of their first choice. Organisations are advised to refer to the Welsh Language Board's Voluntary Sector Strategy on the Board's Website for further guidance.

Agreements with Voluntary Organisations

We have voluntary organisations that provide a purely Welsh service to pre school children through Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the All Wales Pre School Playgroups.

In respect of the allocation of Voluntary Organisation Grants we ensure that the Service provided promotes language of choice to those who come into contact with it and complies with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme. Language choice is monitored and included in the annual report for all organisations that we have contracts with. The Children and Family Services recently tendered for services and have required that the service provide a copy of their Welsh language scheme or direct Officers to where a copy is available.

General Contracts in the Children and Family Services

General contracts are monitored in relation to the promotional material they produce to ensure that in Wales they are bilingual. Also monitored are communications sent out to our services users.

Examples are:

- a newsletter sent by NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service) to our children and young people is bilingual.
- CWLWM which is part of the Cartref Bontnewydd group provides a Family Group Conferencing service to the Council. Family Group has been monitored recently and it has been found that the majority of their staff are bilingual, leaflets, agendas and minutes are all produced bilingually.

9.5 Corporate Contracts

We have also undertaken some more general 'sampling' of corporate contracts to ascertain if the contracts make reference to our Welsh Language Policy.

Print Tender Contract

The information below was in the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and Tender documents for the Print and Graphic Design Tender run by Denbighshire County Council on a North Wales regional basis in 2006.

*Does your company have procedures in place to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 (or as amended) when acting on behalf of public sector bodies. If **yes**, please provide details*

And

The Contractor shall comply with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993 (or as amended from time to time) and all other relevant legislation and statutory requirements.

Tourist Information Centre Tender

The following information was in the tender for Tourist Information Centre management in 2007

The Contractor shall comply with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993 (or as amended from time to time) and all other relevant legislation and statutory requirements.

and

The successful provider of the service shall conform to the Denbighshire County Council Welsh Language Policy when producing flyers, handouts and signage which are used in the performance of any contract.

**10 Welsh Language Indicator WLI 2 - Front Line Services
‘An ability to guarantee a Welsh Language service at main receptions, contact centres or one stop shops’.**

10.1 The Council operates many buildings which provide services to the public. For the purposes of this report we have identified our main reception areas in buildings which provide a variety of services and are our principal Council Offices in the various towns in Denbighshire.

Service	No. of Staff	No. Bilingual	%	Comment
One Stop Shops	14	12	85%	Post now classed as Welsh Speaker Essential. One of the English speakers is currently learning Welsh.
Main switchboard	3	3	100%	Staff alternate between switchboard and main reception at County Hall
CCSC Advisors	7	5	71%	CCSC (Customer Call Service Centre)
Supervisor	1	1	100%	
Manager	1	1	100%	
Main Reception Areas	5	4	80%	Five main sites namely Russell House, Caledfryn, Trem Clwyd, County Hall, Brighton Road (Ty Nant reception has been included under OSS figures)

11 Welsh Language Indicator WLI 4 – Human resources – skills

a) ‘The number of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level?’

The numbers below relate to staff who are undertaking courses during the period September 2007 – June 2008.

Level	Number of staff
Advanced	2
Level 4	8
Level 3	20
Beginner Level 1	22
Written Welsh	11
Level 1	1

b) 'The number of staff who have received language awareness training?'

All new members of staff undertake an induction course which highlights the Council's commitment to the Welsh Language through its Welsh Language Scheme and Policies.

**12 Welsh Language Indicator WLI 5 – Human Resources
'The number and % of staff within the Council's services who are able to speak Welsh (excluding school teachers and school based staff)**

Appendix 2 gives a breakdown of staff within each Directorate and Service and their Welsh Language ability.

It should be borne in mind that these figures reflect the individual's perception of their language ability and it is likely that many Welsh speaking staff have classified themselves as 'moderate' rather than 'fluent'. A significant number of Welsh speakers may also have not responded to the questionnaire.

Our system cannot yet give a breakdown in relation to the salary grades of staff, although this should be achievable when our payroll goes live with the HR TRENT system in 2009.

**13 Welsh Language Indicator WLI 6 - Complaints
'Number of complaints received about the implementation of the Welsh Language scheme and the % of complaints dealt with in line with the organisations corporate standards'.**

- 13.1 The complaints processes within Denbighshire are currently under review. We are also developing our recording and reporting mechanisms, and acknowledge that this is an area for marked improvement. In future, we will collate detailed information on complaints including those which fall under the equalities strands. Issues around the Welsh Language will be included in this new Complaints Policy which will be launched in April 2009. An intensive programme of staff training will also be implemented prior to the launch.

13.2 The information below relates to complaints in respect of our Welsh language services which have been documented by the Service involved. For the purposes of this Monitoring Report only external complaints have been recorded and do not include informal complaints raised by colleagues or Members (these complaints generally refer to errors in translation spotted internally and raised in order to improve our delivery of services in Welsh).

13.3 We have had some teething difficulties when adapting new internet based services which has resulted in the occasional difficulty for the Welsh version to be accessible. Examples are:

Internet Electoral Registration Service.

Denbighshire's electorate could choose to complete their Electoral Registration Form on-line in Welsh; however the acknowledgement e-mail was sent in English only. The system was developed by the Electoral Reform Service on behalf of several local authorities. The matter has now been resolved and language specific acknowledgements are now in place.

Electronic Planning Portals.

The National Planning Portal is a web site offering a 'one stop shop' for all stakeholders involved in the planning process. It is part of the Governments push towards reaching its e-government targets. Part of the site is dedicated to allowing the electronic submission of planning applications to the relevant authorities.

As this is a central government project, users are not given the choice of English or Welsh submissions. Therefore, although forms which are submitted through the Portal for Denbighshire have Denbighshire's logo on them, they are in English only.

Along with other local authorities in Wales we have endeavoured to resolve this anomaly. The Portal will go live in July 2008 with a Welsh or English option.

13.4 The following table identifies the nature of the complaint received during the period April 07 – March 08 and the action taken. All of the complaints were dealt with in accordance with our policies for responding to correspondence.

Service	Nature of Complaint	Action taken
Property Management	The sale of a farm estate by an agent acting on our behalf did not have bilingual signage or notices	An apology was made and a response given. Measures are now in place taken to ensure all future sales of property will be undertaken bilingually.
Revenues & Benefits	A flyer sent out with	Due to the possibility of

	Housing Benefit cheques was in English only	a postal strike emergency cheques had to be sent out. Usual procedure is to send out bilingual flyers.
Lifelong Learning	A 'helper' working in a Welsh Medium Primary received CRB forms in Welsh only.	Matter resolved with the correct English documentation sent.
Lifelong Learning	A newly appointed member of a rural school's Parent and Teachers Association was English and the meetings were being conducted in Welsh	The parent is now attending the PTA meeting with a member of staff translating.
Personnel	Several informal complaints from a Welsh Secondary School in respect of 'in-house' information material being sent in English only.	Our policy is to correspond with schools bilingually and an apology was made. The Welsh versions were forwarded within a week. Personnel department are now monitoring the situation.
Personnel	A complaint was received in respect of an 'Occupational Health' Welsh language leaflet containing grammatical errors.	The external translation was checked and altered. (Although some of the 'errors' were a matter of judgement.)
Revenues & Benefits	Complaint that the Non Domestic Rates staff did not speak Welsh.	This is a specialised area with only one dedicated member of staff. The complainant was offered the opportunity to speak with a Welsh speaking member of the Revenue Team.

14 Areas for improvement identified in our Report 2007

- **Implement a new complaints monitoring procedure corporately.**
A new comprehensive complaints procedure will be in place by April 2009
- **Prepare an action plan with specific targets to implement the recommendations outlined in the Welsh Language Board's Risk**

Assessment of the Council's management of our bilingual skills.

This has been achieved and progress reported upon in this Annual Report

- **Review our third party contractual arrangements to ensure compliance with our Welsh Language Policy and undertake further sampling of contracts.**
This has been achieved with progress reports on the improvements undertaken.
- **Undertake awareness training of staff in relation to the Welsh Language Policy and its implications.**
Although awareness training does take place as part of our induction courses we do recognise that more could be achieved. The 'mystery shopper' exercise will highlight Services that require additional awareness training.
- **Prepare an action plan in relation to the Self Assessment of Denbighshire's Children and Young People's Partnership.**
An agreed action plan has been implemented and forms regular reports to Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee.
- **Mainstreaming and promoting the Welsh Language through the utilisation of the Integrated Impact Assessment Tool and making the most of the newly formed Bilingual Members Group and the services offered by Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych.**
These 'mainstreaming opportunities' are ongoing and have been referred to in this Report.
- **Ensure the new HR system encompasses monitoring requirements in respect of the Welsh language skills of staff and can provide Welsh language online services.**
This year has seen the introduction of both the Workforce Planning process and the Language Skills Strategy.
- **Promote awareness of Welsh language courses and the e-gov modules.**
This is ongoing with a healthy number of staff undertaking courses at various levels.

15 Areas for improvement 2008 - 2009

- Introduce a new complaints procedure as identified in this Report.
- Conclude our review of the Translation Service with recommendations to the Members Bilingual Group and Cabinet
- Report on the findings of the 'mystery shopper' exercise and implement recommendations.

- We will assess the work of the North Wales Bilingual Forum to ensure Denbighshire benefits from the service the Forum provides.
- We will monitor how effectively the new TRENT HR system captures information relating to the Welsh Language Skills of our workforce.

16 This Annual Monitoring Report

The Report will be:

- approved by the Lead Member prior to publication and submission to the WLB
- considered by the Bilingual Forum and the council's monthly management conference of senior managers.
- Senior Officers will continue to have productive meetings with colleagues from the Welsh Language Board.

A copy will be made available on our website and a hard copy can be obtained from the Strategic Policy Unit of the Council.

Officers would like to record their appreciation of the informal advice given by the Welsh Language Board in the preparation of this Annual Report.