

Denbighshire County Council

Annual Monitoring Report 2016- 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The strategic responsibility for the Welsh Language in Denbighshire lies with the Council's Corporate Executive Team. The Lead Director is Nicola Stubbins, with Councillor Huw Jones was the political Lead Member with responsibility for the Welsh Language during this reporting period.
- 1.2 Operational handling of Welsh Language issues is the responsibility of the Team Leader for Communications and Campaign Management, with a further strategic Welsh Language Development role introduced in the Council to look at the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards and co-ordination with the Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.3 The Council's main focus during 2016/17 has been around preparing and implementation of the Standards, with regular communication being critical. A series of communications messages have been disseminated to staff; a briefing session was presented to all councillors about the Standards and the officers responsible for the Welsh Language have presented at many management team meetings, meetings of the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet Briefing and the Staff Council.
- 1.4 The Chief Executive has also recorded video messages to staff, highlighting the importance of compliance with the Welsh Language. Details of other developments can be found in the next section.
- 1.5 Whilst the Council already complied with the majority of the Standards as part of their previous Welsh Language Scheme, the Standards provided an opportunity to reinforce the requirements and to ensure compliance.
- 1.6 As well as the new Welsh Language Standards, the Council has continued to respond positively to the Mwy Na Geiriau Framework and the Welsh in Education Strategy Group.(an update on these areas of work can be found later in this document).

2. Key developments during the year

Welsh Language Champions:

All services have a Champion who attends quarterly meetings to discuss internal development of the language. The Group looks at a wide range of issues, including training opportunities, spot checks on compliance with the Standards, opportunities to improve the bilingual culture of the organisation and act as the internal contact within services.

The members also act as a critical friend to the corporate team who are leading on the Welsh Language policy implementation.

Members' Welsh Strategic Group:

The creation of a new group to monitor progress with the Welsh Language development has been approved. The Group will be Member led and will have 11 members representing the various political groups. Officers will be called upon to provide updates as and when it is appropriate.

This Group will have the powers to make recommendations to Cabinet and other scrutiny bodies. These meetings will be open to the public.

Welsh Language Strategy:

The Council has adopted a strategy on how it intends to promote the language over the next five years. The Strategy has been broken down into distinct areas: Children and Young People (including education and youth work); Business and the Economy; Communities; Internal Administration within the Council and the strategic development of the Welsh Language in Denbighshire.

This strategy is being monitored by the Welsh Language Champions and the Members' Welsh Strategic Group.

Drop-in sessions:

A series of drop-in sessions have been held for staff across the county to come and discuss issues and concerns about the Welsh Language, as well as advice on how they can strengthen the language in their own services.

Health and Well-Being Assessment:

The Council has introduced a Health and Well-being assessment which asks all departments to consider the effects (positive, negative or neutral) of any policy decision on the Welsh Language. This has been in direct response to the Standards.

This is now built into the decision making process and all services are using this new template.

Welsh In Business project:

A pilot project has been held in three key towns, with the aim of working with local businesses, providing advice and training on using the Welsh language as part of their day to day operations. This included social media training, bilingual marketing, the need for bilingual customer care and using the opportunity to use the language to enhance their business and profit margins.

Partnership Working:

The Council is an active partner on the Denbighshire County Language Forum. It hosts quarterly meetings of the Forum and takes its turn in chairing the meeting.

It provides quarterly updates on the strategic development of the Welsh language, opportunities for training and development and it works closely with other organisations to promote joint working and closer collaboration.

The Council regularly meets with Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych to look at ways of joint working and provides an annual grant to assist them in their work.

There is further partnership working going on with Coleg Cambria, who provide Welsh language lessons for the Council's staff.

Members Bilingual Forum:

The Forum met three times during 2016/17 to look at Welsh Language issues. Key items under discussion have been a review of the corporate translation services, street naming policy and updates on the Welsh Language Standards implementation.

3. Welsh Language Indicators

Below is a response to the national Welsh language indicators reported that progress is measured against in Denbighshire.

<p>Number and % of posts in the main reception area, contact centre or one stop shop designated as being Welsh essential and the % of those filled by Welsh speakers.</p>	<p>There are 7 staff in the Call Centre / Main Reception – 4 of these speak Welsh.</p> <p>Two part time members of staff also work for the service. They are both Welsh speakers.</p> <p>66% of staff in the Council's One Stop Shops speak Welsh.</p>
<p>The % of a sample of monitored contracts that comply with the requirements of the language scheme.</p>	<p>It is down to individual services to ensure that their contracts comply with the requirements of the language scheme. 100% of contracts have been monitored, in line with corporate guidelines.</p>
<p>Number of complaints received concerning the implementation of the language scheme and the % of complaints dealt with in accordance with the organisation's corporate standards.</p>	<p>Five formal complaints in relation to the Welsh Language were recorded by the Council.</p> <p>All of the complaints (100%) were adhered to within the corporate timescales.</p>
<p>The number and % of staff (Welsh speaking and learners) who have received training in the Welsh language to a specific level of competence.</p>	<p>17 individuals in Year 1 8 individuals in Year 2 10 individuals in Year 4.</p> <p>In total, 35 individuals have been on formal training courses in 2016/17, offered through Coleg Cambria.</p>

<p>The number and percentage of staff in the organisation's service who can speak Welsh</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) By service department2) According to the grade of post3) Per workplace	<p>The information is collated annually by the Council on its Trent system and the results can be found in Appendix 1.</p>
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Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language Standards expect the Council to report, in its annual report, on a number of key performance indicators. Below is the information summarised.

A list of actions undertaken to comply with the service delivery standards.

- We have provided communications to staff around responding to correspondence, arranging meetings and telephone answering
- We have ensured that all staff offer people the opportunity to be transferred to a Welsh speaker when contacting the Council.
- We have introduced one telephone number for the Council's main switchboard, which offers people the option of choosing a Welsh Language Service.
- We have provided wording for staff to include in letter templates, offering residents an opportunity to request correspondence in Welsh in future.
- We have placed a message on the Contact's Centre's recorded message to state that the Welsh Language line is available.
- We have notified staff arranging public meetings that all publicity/ invites should be in Welsh, that simultaneous translators should be arranged for each public meeting and that organisers of public meetings should remind people at the start of meetings that they can contribute in Welsh
- All documents produced for public use are bilingual, including promotional materials and exhibition documentation.
- The interface and menus on every page of our website are bilingual.
- All grant forms received in Welsh are responded to in Welsh

A list of actions taken to comply with the Operational Standards during 2016/17

- We have produced a policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language and this document has been published on our intranet.
- We have introduced a HR process where all staff will be asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence relating to his or her employment and which is addressed to him/ her personally (in Welsh).
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence relating to his or her training needs or requirement in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents that outline their performance objectives in Welsh and we will provide documents in Welsh if that is their wish.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents that outline s their career plan in Welsh and we will provide documents in Welsh if that is their wish.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive forms that record and authorise annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours in Welsh.
- Staff are able to make complaints in Welsh through the corporate complaints procedure and this has been publicised to staff.
- The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure already states that staff may make a complaint in Welsh and has the right to respond to complaint made about him or her in Welsh. Staff have been made aware of that right.
- All staff will be offered an opportunity to host any meetings regarding complaints made against them in Welsh (with or without the use of a translator)
- Any record of decision relating to a complaint against a member of staff will be issued in Welsh (and any subsequent meeting will be conducted in Welsh).
- Our HR policies state that staff can respond in Welsh to any allegations made against them.

- Computer software for checking spelling and grammar has been provided to all staff who speak or learn Welsh and Welsh Language interfaces for software (such as Microsoft Word) is provided in Welsh.
- We have translated the text of our intranet homepage into Welsh.
- Any pages on the intranet that have corresponding pages in Welsh includes a direct link to the Welsh language page.
- Pages have been created on the intranet which provides services and support material to promote the Welsh language and assist staff in using the Welsh language.
- The interface and menus on the intranet are in Welsh.
- The Council has carried out an assessment of the Welsh language skills of employees through a self-assessment.
- The Council actively promotes opportunities during working hours for employees to receive basic Welsh Language courses
- The Council provides opportunities for staff wanting to further their basic Welsh training through offering further training.
- The Council has developed an e-learning module, to raise staff's awareness of the Welsh Language.
- Information to raise awareness of the Welsh language is provided to all new staff.
- We have provided wording for staff to use on their e-mail signature, to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or are learners.

Staff Linguistic Skills

Below is the information currently held by the Council. This information is fed back to services, to allow Heads of Service to progress with their Workforce Planning.

Do you speak Welsh?

	Total
0 - Not at all	915
1 - A little	389
2 - Moderately	128
3 - Fairly fluent	53
4 - Fluent	136
Not Known	2577
Grand Total	4198

Can you Listen/Understand Welsh?

	Total
0 - Not at all	958
1 - A little	369
2 - Moderately	150
3 - Fairly fluent	64
4 - Fluent	142
Not Known	2515
Grand Total	4198

Can you read Welsh?

	Total
0 - Not at all	1106
1 - A little	327
2 - Moderately	133
3 - Fairly fluent	49
4 - Fluent	128
Not Known	2455
Grand Total	4198

Can you write in Welsh?

	Total
0 - Not at all	1273
1 - A little	287
2 - Moderately	105
3 - Fairly fluent	41
4 - Fluent	114
Not Known	2378
Grand Total	4198

Up-date on the implementation of More than Just Words (2016-17)

A core part of any care provision, and which is a key part of 'assessing individuals needs', is the need to make sure that individuals can receive the service through the medium of Welsh and that the service is patient-centred and enables the individual to fully understand the services being offered.

The Government's 'More Than Words Framework' which is being implemented in Denbighshire outlines the requirement to respond in full to this expectation, and specifically to the need for the 'Active Offer' and ensuring that Welsh speaking individuals are treated with dignity and respect by asking them what their preferred language is and acting on it. Making an 'Active Offer' means not making assumptions that all Welsh speakers speak English anyway, it's also about creating a change in culture that takes the responsibility off the individual to ask for a service through the medium of Welsh.

Within Denbighshire both our Single Point of Access and the Children's Gateway have recruited Welsh speaking staff and are ensuring that the 'Active Offer' is evident at the first point of contact (e.g. options of language preference on the telephone). In addition the recording of user's language of need is captured on PARIS at the point of referral, at assessment and at the reviewing stage.

Additional examples of good practice in implementing the More than Just Words Framework include:

- Regular items about the Welsh language, resources and information about various free training courses (Welsh Awareness and the 'Active Offer') are included in the SCWDP newsletter which is distributed to all Providers in Denbighshire. This has included information about the Diwrnod Shwmai and Dydd Miwsic.

- Information about the Welsh language and the Active Offer has also been incorporated into the welcome meeting for new staff joining the Department and to Social Work students at induction. In addition a presentation about the “Active Offer” was communicated to over 300 staff from Community Support Services.
- Corporate HR are currently mapping the language skills of DCC staff on I-Trent and the Welsh language community profile has been prepared for DCC (informed by the Population Assessment Report produced under section 14 off the SSWB Act).
- A buddy scheme and an informal session “Siarad siop a phaned” has been introduced to offer additional support between lessons to increase staff confidence to speak the language within the Department.

Additional evidence

Our customer experience questionnaire monitors whether people were provided with a service in the language of their choice. The following is extracted from the Have your say survey analysis relating to the question: ‘I was able to communicate in my preferred language’.

424 respondents answered this question, 99% were able to communicate in their preferred language

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Q9 – I was able to communicate in my preferred language.		
Yes or Sometimes	421	99%
No	1	0%
Don't Know	2	1%
Total completed	424	

Update on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The plan for the period 2014 – 2017 has now come to an end and the achievements are summarised below:

- The number of 7 year old pupils receiving Welsh Medium education increased from 262 pupils (24% of the cohort) in 2013/14 to 303 pupils (27% of the cohort) in 2016/17. To support this increase, capital projects have been completed in Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, Ysgol Y Llys and Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy which has increased capacity and removed the use of mobile accommodation. In addition school reorganisation projects have been completed establishing Ysgol Carreg Emlyn in 2014 which enabled better use of the existing school places in the area to the west of Ruthin.
- The target to increase the percentage of Year 9 learners who are assessed in Welsh (First Language) to 21% was achieved two years early by 2015/16.
- The target of 18% of learners aged 14-16 to study for qualifications through the medium of Welsh by 2017 was also achieved two years early.
- Attainment in Welsh 1st language has improved at every key stage over the period 2014-17. The largest improvement has taken place in Key Stage 2 with 90.6% achieving level 4+ in 2016 compared to 85.1% in 2014.

A new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2020 has been prepared and a consultation was undertaken in the autumn of 2016. We are currently awaiting approval of the plan from Welsh Government and Denbighshire County Council Cabinet.