

# **Denbighshire County Council Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2019-20**

# Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2019-20

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## Introduction

Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to responding positively to the Welsh language standards and this has been reflected in the Welsh language Strategy. That commitment has not changed and we are fully committed to playing our part towards national efforts to increase the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050.

The duties arising from the Standards mean that the Council should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, as well as promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language (making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in everyday life).

The purpose of the standards is to:

- provide greater clarity to organizations on their Welsh Language duties
- give more clarity to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh
- ensure greater consistency and quality of Welsh language services.

Strategic responsibility for the Welsh Language in Denbighshire lay with the Council's Corporate Executive Team. The Lead Director is Nicola Stubbins, and the political Lead Member is Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts who was responsible for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement over the period of this report.

- The active handling of Welsh language issues is the responsibility of the Team Leader for Communications and Campaigns Management, with the role of a strategic Welsh Language Officer also presented to the Council in early 2018.
- The Council's main focus in 2019/20 was to continue to implement the Welsh Language Standards within the authority, working closely with Welsh Language Champions across the county to ensure compliance with the 167 Standards under the headings Service Planning, Policy Making, Promotion and Record Keeping.
- In addition to the new Welsh Language Standards, the Council has continued to respond positively to the 'More Than Just Words' Framework and the Welsh in

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Education Strategic Group (an update on this work will be provided later in this document).

## Key developments during the year

A number of key projects have been introduced during the year to ensure the delivery of the Welsh language standards. Some of those projects are:

### Welsh Language Champions

Each service in the Council has a Welsh language champion with meetings held every three months to monitor progress with the standards and share best practice and act as a critical friend. Members have a thorough understanding of the needs of the standards and the associated strategy, holding awareness-raising sessions and a mystery shopper along with other activities for colleagues and learners.

### Council Staff Eisteddfod

The Council held its second Eisteddfod on March 6th as part of the St David's Day celebrations. The event is part of the Council's efforts to raise the profile and gain a better understanding of the language, and to celebrate the culture of Wales all in line with our Welsh language strategy. It comes at a time when there is a lot of attention on the Welsh language and the fact that the Urdd Eisteddfod is returning to the county in May 2021 now, as the 2020 Eisteddfod has been postponed. Once again this year the response and support received has been amazing, with 62 members of staff registering to compete. Competitions included Limerick writing, cake decorating, judge's recipe (Bara Brith), cooking a meal using leeks, tapas using a Welsh ingredient, knitting or sewing, photography, creating a sentence out of the word CENNIN PEDR, Flower arranging as well as two live competitions this year, Choir and Story and Sound.

### Staff Council Choir – Sain y Sir (the sound of the county)

The choir continues to be hugely popular within the council with 8 new Welsh learner members joining over the last year bringing the total to 22 members. The choir is for Welsh learners primarily to promote the Welsh language and culture, but specifically to give them

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the opportunity to practice their Welsh by learning traditional Welsh songs, but Welsh speakers are also members to assist with the learning. They have performed at two events over the past year, namely the Council Carol Service at St Mary's Church, Denbigh, and also opened the Staff Eisteddfod.

## Tea and Talk

There's a Tea and Talk session at County Hall, Ruthin and Russell House, Rhyl for staff who wish to practice their Welsh in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. Having a quick chat over a cup of coffee helps people improve their social skills, form relationships and improve their mental and physical wellbeing. We meet once a week at lunchtime to do various activities to encourage staff to use, develop and nurture their Welsh language skills. We have a book club taking place once a month during a session where we read books from the 'Amdani' series for Welsh learners, and give them the opportunity to discuss the book and voice their opinion in Welsh.

## Owain Glyndŵr Day

This year to celebrate Owain Glyndwr's Day, we made a video to show Glyndŵr's links with Denbighshire and significant places within the county relating to his history. These places include Glyndyfrdwy where one of Glyndŵr's two principal courts was located as well as the fact that Glyndŵr took his name from his estates around this area; a mount in Llidiart-y-Parc near Glyndyfrdwy where he was announced as the Prince of Wales; Bryn Saith Marchog where he had a row with Sir Reginald Grey (Lord of the Vale of Clwyd in Ruthin) concerning common ground that quickly evolved into a rebellion over independence for Wales; Ruthin where the town was burned to the ground except for the castle; Denbigh and Rhuddlan were also attacked, and there is a plaque on the former Natwest building in Ruthin which was unveiled by Dafydd Iwan in 2000 to mark 600 years of Glyndŵr. We received very positive feedback from staff and many indicating that they were unaware of the significance Denbighshire had in Glyndŵr's history. We will share this video for our staff on Owain Glyndŵr Day each year as well as sharing it on our social media accounts. [Watch the Owain Glyndwr video on youtube.](#)

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## **The Adventures of Cled the Elf**

Cled the Elf came to visit the Council this year to get everyone into the festive spirit. Cled was a similar version to the Elf on the Shelf but he went around different locations in Denbighshire to promote the Welsh language. He started at County Hall, Ruthin and whoever found him was allowed to take him for the day to do Welsh activities. That staff member then had to leave Cled somewhere for another staff member to find him, leaving clues of his whereabouts on our daily newsletter. Cled had adventures of all kinds such as going on holiday to Aberdaron and Portmeirion, reading a Welsh book with a member of staff's children, visiting the County's care homes, dealing with Welsh enquiries in the leisure centre, helping to answer telephone calls in Welsh in the call centre and much more. Cled soon became very popular within the Council and many staff were contacting to ask if they could have him for the day! A small and simple but extremely effective activity. It is important to show staff that they can also have fun through the medium of Welsh and not see it as a corporate language only.

## **'I have rights' Campaign**

For the first time this year on 6 December 2019, public organisations across Wales held a 'Welsh language Rights Day'. This is a day to celebrate Welsh language services offered by organisations, and the rights people have to use Welsh when dealing with them. It was an opportunity to promote Welsh language services and to try to increase the number of the people who choose to use them. This was the first year that the national campaign was held. The date was chosen to indicate the date on which the language legislation was passed by the Assembly in 2010. The aim is to make this an annual campaign. The marketing campaign talks about some of the rights that the public have as well as Council staff. Rather than a one-day campaign we decided to make it a week long so that we didn't give too much information out at the same time with the danger of losing some of the messages.

We had around 3 external messages posted on our social media on a daily basis and internal messages shared with our staff stating the different rights they have. One of the external messages proving effective was a photograph of a member of staff within different services who could speak Welsh. It was good to read kind messages from members of

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the public about our staff within the Council, and how that member of staff has made their experience of using Welsh a positive one.

## St Dwynwen's Day

This year, a competition was organised as part of St Dwynwen's Day celebrations. We hid 6 hearts with letters on them around the council's three main locations - County Hall, Caledfryn and Russell House - and the letters was an anagram of the word CARIAD (the same word at each location). Whoever had the word correct was in on a chance to win a prize. We had a very good response with over 30 members of staff taking part in the competition. In addition to this, we created posters which included Welsh terms relevant for St Dwynwen's Day with a phonetics to accompany the word.

## Welsh learner of the month

We have been choosing one Welsh learner per month within the council to talk about their language journey on video. They talk about what/who motivated them to learn Welsh as well as how they benefit from speaking Welsh in their job. To accompany the video we include the learner's biography which sets out their language journey in more detail. The Welsh learner of the month is intended to inspire and encourage staff to learn Welsh and has worked well so far with praise for the Welsh learner by other members of staff. A great way to for staff to praise and support each other.

## Shwmae Sumae Day

Once again this year we were part of the Shwmae Su'mae Day celebrations on the 15th of October. The day is intended to promote the idea of starting all conversations with in Welsh with either Shwmae or Su'mae. The day's aim is to show that the Welsh language belongs to everyone – fluent speakers, learners or if you are shy to use Welsh. This year we created a video to go hand in hand with the Rugby World Cup competition. We had a red Dragon mascot uniform called Dewi Dragon which was being filmed using the council's Welsh language services. He also passed a rugby ball to other members of staff whilst saying "shwmae" or "Su'mae" to them, and they did the same when passing the ball on. The idea behind this was that the Welsh language was the rugby ball and that we were passing the Welsh language on. [Watch the Shwmae Sumae Day video on youtube.](#)

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## Welsh Language Music Day

We also celebrated the Welsh Language Music Day again this year, creating a special playlist of Welsh songs and encouraging staff to play them during the day in the office, car, and reception areas. Incredible music is created in Welsh and the day celebrates that music.

## Partnership Working

The Council is an active partner of the Welsh language partnership. The forum is made up of a number of organisations, both local and national, working towards the promotion and strategic development of the Welsh language here in Denbighshire.

During the past year, the Welsh language partners have focused their efforts on mapping Welsh activities across the county. This work was led by the Council and although it gave a clear picture that a number of events were located around the main towns, further investigative work was needed to identify activities in more rural communities. This would provide a clear picture of where the partners should focus their efforts. We are in the process of creating a pilot scheme on Llangollen so that we can implement the same scheme in other places.

The Council continues to provide financial support to Menter Iaith Denbighshire through an annual grant and the local Urdd. The URDD's funding is used to employ an officer who assists the authority in arranging activities for young people across the county.

## Workforce Planning

All services are expected to produce a Workforce Planning document and services are expected to consider whether they have enough Welsh speakers to provide a fully bilingual service. The service is also being challenged by the Senior Management Team and Councillors regarding compliance with the Language Standards.

## Welsh Lesson

Here are the number of Council staff who attended Welsh lessons through the 'Work Welsh' scheme by the National Center for Learning Welsh: -

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Level	Number
Entry	12
Foundation	3
Intermediate	11
Advanced	0
Proficiency	0
Nant Gwrtheyrn (residential)	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>

There are now 10 hour online Welsh taster courses available for those who want to start their Welsh language journey. These courses introduce everyday vocabulary and phrases and are available to everyone, free of charge. Some courses are tailored to different sectors, namely the health sector, care, public services, teachers, headteachers, tourism and Welsh tourism, retail, Women's Institute and Welsh language information tailored to childcare providers.

Here are the number of staff who have started/finished the on-line courses:-

Course	Number
Welcome	42
Welcome back	10
Improve your work Welsh	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

### Welsh Language Skills Framework

We have introduced a new Framework which is a simple way for staff to self-assess their language skills based on the types of communication tasks (reading, writing, speaking and understanding) they could undertake through the medium of Welsh. This is an effective

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way of being able to monitor what level of skills are needed for the job and what course employees need to move to the next level.

## **Level 0 :**

No current level of Welsh language skills

## **Level 1: Entry**

Can say place names/Welsh first names or Welsh signs correctly.

Can greet and introduce others in Welsh.

Can show linguistic courtesy by opening and closing a conversation.

Can give and receive personal details.

## **Level 2: Foundation**

Can understand the essence of conversation in Welsh

Can convey basic Information e.g. simple admin or routine tasks.

Can give and receive instructions and directions.

## **Level 3: Intermediate**

Can converse partly in Welsh but turns to English in discussion and to give detailed Information.

Can describe people and locations.

## **Level 4: Advanced**

Can contribute effectively in meetings with in own area of work and argue for or against a case.

Can deal with people in most situations in Welsh but turns to English when dealing with complex situations.

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## **Level 5: Proficiency**

Can deal effectively with complex discussions and questions in Welsh.

Can adjust the style of language to suit all situations and needs.

Following this framework will enable us to support employees on their language journey in order to achieve the best possible results. (The results can be found in appendices 1 and 2)

We have also assessed each post within the Council, following the above framework, in terms of what level of Welsh is required for that specific job. No post will be advertised as Welsh desirable as each person will need at least level 1 in Welsh language skills for the post. So in a way Welsh is "essential" for all jobs. If the person does not have the Welsh language skills required for the post, then they are obliged to attend training and reach that level within 6 months, which is the probation period (subject to the situation), with support from our Welsh Language Officer. The Welsh language skills of each service will be monitored every month, and managers will also receive information about the Welsh language ability of employees within their service.

## **Recommendations for further improvement/progress**

These are the main areas that we feel need to be focused on over the next year;

### **Language and e-mail tool**

Over the next year, we plan to develop a language and email tool so that a member of Council staff knows which language to use when writing to a colleague. Currently, staff use the work Welsh logo (Welsh speaker or Welsh learner) at the bottom of their email signature. The problem with this is that an email must be written bilingually in the first instance as it is not possible to see the recipient's email signature until they have replied, by which case they have answered in their preferred language anyway. We will receive support from IT Service in order to move forward and access a list of staff with an email account. The intention is that a message will appear above the staff name saying "I am a

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Welsh speaker / I'm learning Welsh". Although we intend to use this technique, we will continue to use the work Welsh logo so that customers know that they can speak Welsh.

## **Welsh Language Strategy**

The Council already has a 5 year Welsh Language Strategy in place but will need to renew it in 2020/21 so that it is operational by 2022. Therefore our priority is to deliver a strategy for the next 10 years that will set an ambitious goal and targets to ensure Denbighshire is a county where Welsh culture and heritage is alive and the Welsh language thrives to try to reach a million speakers by 2050. We will work with partners on setting a target and an action plan.

## **Record Keeping**

### **Complaints**

Three formal complaints were recorded by the Welsh Language Commissioner during 2019-20 in relation to the Welsh language. These related to the receipt of an English only e-mail following the completion of an online Welsh form (no investigation), the Council's School transport Policy (no investigation) and Welsh medium secondary education (further investigation).

## **Bilingual Workplace**

### **Welsh speakers and learners lanyards**

We have distributed a great deal of these to Council staff over the past year. They have been in high demand, especially in care homes and leisure centres where they are used by trainers, reception staff and lifeguards. We have received a number of comments from staff that they are starting more conversations in Welsh as more staff are wearing the lanyards.

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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. The information is summarized below.

### List of actions undertaken to comply with service delivery standards.

- We have communicated with staff on responding to correspondence, arranging meetings and answering the telephone.
- We have ensured that all staff give 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 gives people the option of choosing a Welsh Language Service.
- We have provided staff with wording to be included in letter templates, giving residents the opportunity to request correspondence through the medium of Welsh in the future.
- We have included a message in the contact centre's recorded message saying that a Welsh language line is available.
- We have informed staff arranging public meetings that publicity/invitations must always be in Welsh, that simultaneous translation should be arranged for every public meeting and that organisers of public meetings should remind people at the beginning of meetings that they can contribute in Welsh.
- All documents for the public are bilingual, including promotional materials and exhibition documents. Mae'r rhyngwyneb a'r dewislenni ar bob tudalen o'n gwefan yn ddwyieithog.
- We respond to all grant forms we receive in Welsh.
- We have launched a promotional campaign to market the council's social accounts in Welsh.

### List of actions undertaken to comply with the Operational standards.

- We have created a policy on the use of Welsh internally to promote and facilitate the use of the language and this document has been published on our intranet.

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- We have introduced a Human Resources process asking all staff whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence about their training needs or requirements in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents that describe their performance objectives in Welsh, and we will provide documents in Welsh if they wish.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents that describe their career plan in Welsh, and we will provide documents in Welsh if they wish.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive forms that record and authorize annual leave, absence from work and flexible hours in Welsh.
- Staff can submit complaints in Welsh through a corporate complaints procedure and this has been notified to all staff.
- The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure already states that staff have the right to make a complaint in Welsh and to respond to a complaint made about them in Welsh. Staff have been informed of these rights.
- All staff will be given the opportunity to request any meeting concerning complaints against them in Welsh (with or without the use of a translator).
- A record of all decisions made on a complaint against a member of staff will be published in Welsh (and any subsequent meeting will be held in Welsh).
- Our Human Resources policies state that staff can respond in Welsh to any allegations made against them.
- Computer spell check and grammar software has been provided to all staff who speak or learn Welsh as well as Welsh language software interfaces (such as Microsoft Word).
- We have translated the text of our intranet home page into Welsh.
- Each page on the intranet with a corresponding page in Welsh contains a link to that Welsh language page.
- Created intranet pages providing services and support materials to promote the Welsh language and assist staff to use the Welsh language.
- The interface and menus on the intranet are in Welsh.

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- The Council has undertaken an assessment of the Welsh language skills of its staff through a self-assessment.
- The Council promotes all opportunities during working hours for staff to attend basic Welsh Language courses.
- The Council gives staff who wish to continue their basic Welsh language training the opportunity to receive further training.
- The Council has developed an e-learning module to raise staff awareness of the Welsh Language.
- Information to raise awareness of the Welsh language is given to all new staff.
- We have provided staff with wording to use in their email signatures to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or learners.

## Progress with the ' more than just words ' framework

### Inform all internal staff and commissioned services of the 'Active Offer'

This year the work of raising the sector's awareness of the Active Offer has continued. A presentation was given at a Care Providers Conference and items on 'More than Just Words' and the Active Offer are included in quarterly Newsletters for providers. Work Welsh posters and lanyards are distributed as well as Work Welsh stickers.

All Council internal staff are expected to complete an e-learning module on 'Welsh Language Awareness' and staff new to the department receive a presentation on 'More Than Just Words' as part of their induction. A similar presentation is given to Social Work students based in the authority. We have also updated the 'placements' form for Social Work students so that they can identify their language skills for the purpose of matching with specific assessors.

In addition a half day course has been run for 'front line' staff and the single point of access service. The aim of the course is to ensure that individuals have the skills to meet and greet the public in Welsh and make the Active Offer.

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## Workforce planning including recruitment of staff with Welsh language skills

The Council is committed to promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace and is currently gathering information on the skill level of staff - in line with the Welsh Language Standards. The information will help us identify if there are any gaps in provision, as well as identify any training needs.

Social Care Wales also collects data annually on the language skills of staff of all Social Care providers across Wales - by Authority.

## Increase the use of Welsh across Social Care workstations

We have ensured that the workstations are aware of the free resources, apps and courses available (to include online courses) for staff who want to learn Welsh or improve their Welsh language skills. This information is also available on the Council's internal website.

A short Welsh taster course has been offered to Care workers, as well as a 'Give your Welsh a go' course tailored for Care staff who have received bilingual education but need to gain the confidence to use their Welsh.

4 members of staff have attended a Residential course at Nant Gwrtheyrn. In addition 'Tea and Talk' sessions are held to give internal staff opportunities to practice their Welsh.

## Staff Welsh Language Skills

The information currently held by the Council is presented below. This information is fed back to services so that Heads of Service can plan their workforce.

### Corporate Results Only (excluding Schools)

Level	Listening / Speaking	Reading / Understanding	Writing
Level 0	14%	17%	25%

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<b>Level</b>	<b>Listening / Speaking</b>	<b>Reading / Understanding</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	37%	37%	30%
<b>Level 2</b>	11%	9%	10%
<b>Level 3</b>	6%	5%	5%
<b>Level 4</b>	7%	7%	5%
<b>Level 5</b>	6%	6%	5%
<b><i>Information not obtained</i></b>	20%	20%	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## School Staff Only

<b>Level</b>	<b>Number of staff</b>	<b>Staff %</b>
Level 0	381	19.3%
Level 1	523	26.5%
Level 2	291	14.8%
Level 3	118	6.0%
Level 4	89	4.5%
Level 5	510	25.9%
Information nor obtained	59	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Recruitment - Jobs advertised during the year

Here are details of the number / percentage of jobs notified for the financial year 2019/2020. We had the following Welsh language requirements on our advertised vacancies for contracted posts:

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Indication	Number of posts by language category	% of jobs by language category
Desirable	634	87.9
Essential	83	11.5
Not essential	4	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: the four vacancies where Welsh was deemed not essential were cleaner, caretaker, French teacher and teacher.

## Welsh Training Undertaken

Below are details of the number / percentage of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level and the number of staff who have received language awareness training during 2019-20.

### Appendix 1 - Welsh Language Awareness (including schools)

Status	%
Completed	46.8%
Not completed	53.2%

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## Appendix 2 - Various courses held in Welsh

Date	Details	Number of attendants
09/07/2019	Welsh taster course	9
03/10/2019	Greeting the public in Welsh course	23
22/01/2020- 23/01/2020	Give your Welsh a go (2 day course)	5
28/01/2020	Tweeting in Welsh	4
07/02/2020	'More than just words' – workshop for CSS Managers and Children's Services.	9

Total Number of attendants: 50

## Welsh Language Strategic Group Action Plan

### Key Achievements / Highlights: -

**Welsh Language Center in St Asaph** - During the year this project has been developed with the tender process completed along with the approval of a planning application for additional on-site parking. This allows the refurbishment to take place in early 2020. The capital works are funded by the Welsh Government.

**Staff training** - During 2019, 10 members of staff from 5 schools have attended the sabbatical course. In addition a further 24 school staff receive termly training and guidance.

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**Increase in the percentage of children transferring from KS2 to KS3** - In 2018 the percentage transferring from KS2 to KS3 was 88%. In 2019 this has increased to 93%.

**Childcare Grant** - Denbighshire County Council has secured a capital grant to support pre-school care places in Denbigh and Rhyl. In 2019, 94% of the children transferred from Cylchoedd Meithrin to Welsh Medium Foundation Phase provision. The grant will see the relocation of Cylch Bodawen (54% transfer) and Cylch Rhuddlan (86% transfer) to the Ysgol Twm o'r Nant and Ysgol Dewi Sant sites.

**Number of primary pupils receiving Welsh-medium education** - In 2017 there were 2028 full-time primary pupils in our schools accessing Welsh-medium education. In September 2019 there were 2069 primary pupils in our schools. This is a 2% increase.