

Denbighshire County Council Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2023-24

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Foreword

It is my pleasure to present to you this Annual Monitoring Report. As Denbighshire County Council operates a flexible working policy whereby staff are entitled to work in various different ways such as working from home, the use of information technology has been

carefully refined in order to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. An example of this is the procedure for ensuring that webcasts of meetings include the option to receive simultaneous translation into English when participants contribute in Welsh. The Council creates opportunities for staff to use the Welsh language socially, face-to-face, and virtually.

The Council's new five-year strategy allows staff and customers to communicate in their language of choice, whether virtually, online, or face-to-face. It is hoped that the Strategy will encourage more staff and customers to make use of their knowledge of Welsh, whether they learned the language in childhood or are learning it anew.

Implementing the Welsh Language Standards is important, and it is fair to say that any failure on the part of the Council to implement one or more of the Standards would give strong cause for ensuring that such a failure was not repeated. In this report you will see examples of the positive action taken by the Council in dealing with three cases brought to the Council's attention during 2023-24.



Councillor Emrys Wynne

Lead Member for the Welsh Language, Heritage and Culture

Introduction

The Welsh Language Standards introduced under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 require the Council to publish an annual report no later than 30 June outlining the work accomplished to comply with the requirements of the Standards between April 1st and March 31st. The report focusses on our eighth year of implementing the Welsh Language Standards. Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to responding

positively to the Welsh Language Standards and this is reflected in our Welsh Language Strategy for 2017-22 and our revised Language Strategy for the next five years, which shall be published in the months ahead. We are fully committed to playing our part in the national efforts to increase the number of Welsh speakers to one million by 2050. [View the full list of Standards with which we are required to comply.](#)

We now operate a flexible working policy whereby staff are entitled to work in various different ways, including:

- **Desktop:** for those who mainly work in the office and sit at the same desk each day;
- **Mobile/Flexible:** for those who must spend some time out of the office;
- **Co-location:** a flexible or desktop worker who must work in the office of another organisation;
- **Home:** for those most likely to be working from home.

The transition from working in offices to working from home in the past four years has been made considerably easier by making use of information technology, and we continue to do so in implementing the flexible working scheme in order to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. Most of activities have reverted to being face-to-face and great efforts have also been made to create opportunities for staff to use Welsh socially, face-to-face and virtually.

The duties which derive from the Standards mean that organisations should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than English and should promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, thereby making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in their everyday lives.

The purposes of the Standards are to:

- provide greater clarity to organisations on their duties in relation to the Welsh language
- provide greater clarity to Welsh speakers about the services they can expect to receive in Welsh
- ensure greater consistency of Welsh language services and improve their quality.

under the headings:

- Service Planning
- Policymaking
- Promotion
- Record-keeping.

We are supporting the workforce more than ever in implementing the Welsh Language Standards and our target is to double the daily usage of the Welsh language. This shall be accomplished by promoting Welsh courses to set them on their language journey, or confidence-building courses and in-house activities for them to develop and foster their skills.

The main focus for the Council in 2023/24 was to review our current Strategy and prepare a new five-year Strategy for Denbighshire in collaboration with Council services and the Denbighshire Welsh Language Forum. The Strategy has been developed around the vision of ensuring that the Welsh Language is a thriving language that evolves within Denbighshire's communities, as well as within our organisation. Its purpose is to explain how we intend to create more opportunities to use the Welsh language, encourage greater use of the language and ultimately to see an increased number of Welsh speakers by 2028.

We have formed our vision for the Welsh language in Denbighshire.

- The Corporate Plan 2022-27 has been amended during the year and instead of having one objective about the Welsh language and culture which sat apart from the other objectives, it was recognised that Welsh needed to be mainstreamed into each one of the six priorities within the Corporate Plan. Monitoring methods will be put in place for each of the priorities in the revised corporate plan to ensure that the Council meets this goal.
- Denbighshire is a predominantly bilingual county with a rich heritage and culture. We are proud of this and want that pride to be reflected in our daily work with communities, residents and our staff.
- We are committed to ensuring that the principles of the Welsh Language Standards are the basis for the method in which we provide services to the public; we want

people to be able to access services through their natural language of choice, at every stage of their lives.

- We wish to build on the bilingual culture and ethos of the organisation, providing training and social opportunities for our staff to work in Welsh and to increase their confidence to use the language in the workplace.
- We shall work with partners and the wider community to ensure that Welsh is a thriving language in Denbighshire.

In addition to the above, the Council has continued to respond positively to the 'More Than Just Words' Framework and the Welsh in Education Strategic Group (an update on this work is provided further on in this document).

Executive Summary

The Council is an active partner in the Welsh Language Forum led by the Denbighshire Welsh Language Initiative. A number of local and national organisations participate in the Forum, working towards promoting and developing the Welsh language strategically in Denbighshire.

Denbighshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan until 2032 includes information about merging the current Welsh in Education Strategic Group with the County's Welsh Language Forum. During the last year, the Welsh Language Forum officers have focussed their efforts on combining the Forum and the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan, emulating other successful models. This means that each meeting is divided into two parts with one part dedicated specifically to Education and the other dedicated specifically to the Welsh Language Forum.

We have established a service level agreement with the Denbighshire Welsh Language Initiative as they receive an annual grant from us. In exchange, the Initiative assists the Council in its efforts to promote and enhance the Welsh language in Denbighshire by providing good will support during the year. This includes:

- Conducting a secret shopper exercise and reporting results annually, in addition to providing an useful source of primary data for the Council.

- Undertaking specific projects that have been identified and agreed upon to promote the use of Welsh in Denbighshire schools and communities.
- Attending sub-group meetings of the Welsh in Education Strategic Partnership and making a contribution to achieving the priorities of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the Welsh Language Strategy.

Within each Council Service there is a Welsh Language Champion and meetings are held regularly to monitor progress against the Standards, to share good practice and to act as a critical friend. We have two Welsh Language Champions for each service. Members have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the Standards and the associated strategy, and also conduct secret shopper exercises.

Internal communication work for the Council has been done again in 2023-24, continuing to reinforce the Welsh Language Standards by sharing checklists for correspondence, arranging meetings and answering the telephone. We have also been sharing vocabulary lists with staff along with phonetics to assist Welsh learners. We have been using national days as a focus point such as Dydd Santes Dwynwen, St David's Day, Welsh Language Music Day, Shwmae Su'mae etc.

Background to the report

The preparation of an annual report forms part of an organisation's self-regulatory work. [View the documents we hold which detail the organisation's arrangements for compliance with the standards, the Welsh Language Statement and the Welsh Language Strategy for 2017-2022.](#)

Strategic responsibility for the Welsh Language in Denbighshire rests with the Council's Corporate Operations Team. The Lead Director is Gary Williams and the political Lead Member is Councillor Emrys Wynne, whom was responsible for the Welsh Language, Heritage and Culture during the period to which this report relates. Manon Celyn, the Council's Welsh Language Officer, was responsible for actively dealing with Welsh language issues up until the end of October 2023. Since then there hasn't been a Welsh Language Officer in post, but an individual has now been appointed and will take up the role in August 2024.

If you wish to discuss the report please contact the officer directly by e-mailing cymraeg@sirddinbych.gov.uk.

Matters arising during the reporting period

Welsh Language Training completed

Please find information below about the number of staff that have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level and the number of staff who have had Welsh language awareness training in 2023-2024.

Appendix 1 - Welsh Language Awareness (including schools)

Status	%
completed	74
not completed	26

Supervision/Proof-reading arrangements

The success in securing two Welsh Language Champions in each service has given those services the opportunity to receive support with proof-reading documents while promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language, and similar support is also provided by the Welsh Language Officers and fluent Welsh speakers within teams.

A bilingual workforce

We have been doing a great deal of essential work to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language internally and externally over the last year in order to ensure that the Welsh Language Standards are implemented. These are some of projects undertaken:

‘Mae gen i hawl’ campaign

This is a national campaign to celebrate the Welsh language services that Local Authorities offer, and the rights that people have to use Welsh when dealing with them. It

was an opportunity to promote Welsh language services in Denbighshire and seek to increase the number of people who choose to use them. The marketing campaign highlighted some of the rights that the public have, as well as Council staff.

Dydd Santes Dwynwen

A quiz about the history of Santes Dwynwen was produced as part of the celebrations. It was shared internally and externally on our social media channels. We also produced a document containing [relevant Welsh vocabulary](#) with phonetics to help Welsh learners.

Shwmae Su'mae! Day

We took part in celebrating Shwmae Su'mae Day again this year on 15 October. The aim of the day is to promote the idea of starting every conversation with 'Shwmae' or 'Su'mae' with the aim of showing that the Welsh language belongs to us all – fluent speakers, learners or those shy about their Welsh. We shared some messages on our social accounts along with the video we created of pupils throughout the county's schools passing a rugby ball after saying "shwmae" or "su'mae". The concept was that the rugby ball was the Welsh language, and that we all pass it along. [Watch the Shwmae Su'mae Day 2020 video on YouTube here](#).

Welsh Language Music Day

A special playlist of Welsh songs was created to share with staff and encourage them to play them at home, at work, or when driving.

St David's Day

We shared information on our social media channels about the history of Saint David, [relevant Welsh vocabulary](#) and phonetics to assist Welsh learners and to produce a St. David's Day quiz with a prize of Welsh cakes and a daffodil flowerpot for the winner.

Welsh Language Steering Group

The committee has continued to meet online and has invited some of our partners to give presentations on their work in the county.

Working Welsh Logo / E-mail signature

Staff who can speak Welsh include a logo at the bottom of their e-mail signature to let customers and colleagues know that they can speak Welsh. In the same vein, we have developed a logo for learners which says 'Dw i'n dysgu Cymraeg' (I'm learning Welsh). A large number of Welsh learners have included this logo below their e-mail signatures.

Promoting the Welsh Language Standards

We continue to share those documents produced to promote the Welsh Language Standards to share on the Council staff Facebook page, our daily newsletter, our intranet and our VisionTime system. It is a checklist for staff to ensure that they comply with the Standards and follow the guidelines issued. There are templates for answering the phone bilingually, arranging meetings and correspondence.

Welsh Language Policy

We have prepared a new [Welsh Language Policy](#) (standard 98) which explains how we will operate in accordance with the requirements of the Standards. It is based on the principle that the Welsh and English languages are of equal status in our work and administrative processes. It also acknowledges our responsibility to protect and promote the Welsh language and to develop use of the language both externally and within the Council, and explains to staff how to comply fully with each standard.

Daily newsletter and e-mail messages

Following the publication of our new policy on the Welsh language in internal processes, our daily newsletter to staff, 'Heddiw yn Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire Today', is now published bilingually, along with any e-mails/system messages sent to all members of staff, such as messages about fire drills, ICT updates etc. This is all part of our efforts to try to become a Council which administers its business bilingually in the future.

Service Compliance Reviews

We have produced a Service Performance Measurement form which was sent to senior managers to complete on behalf of their departments. The purpose of the form is to

ascertain whether we continue to be in full compliance with the Standards or if certain services need support in order to fulfil the requirements.

Website usage statistics

Website	Number of visits*	Number of visitors**
www.sirddinbych.gov.uk	15,836	6,196
www.denbighshire.gov.uk	889,757	329,020
Total	905,593	335,216

***Visits** - visits represent the total number of interactions (i.e. visits) made by people to the website. (For example, 1 visitor can visit the website 3 times on the same day).

****Visitors** - visitors are the number of individuals / people who have accessed the website or web page within the reporting period. It's the unique amount of people who visit, regardless of how many times they visit.

The Welsh Language Strategy

In the last two years we have been working on reviewing our current Welsh Language Strategy for the next five years (2023-28). Five years have passed since the current version was approved, and during this time a large number of improvements have been introduced to promote and facilitate the Welsh language internally and within the wider community.

We are playing our part in achieving one million Welsh Speakers in Wales by 2050 by implementing the Welsh Language Strategy alongside our partners and communities. This includes:

- Ensuring that everyone can access services through the medium of Welsh naturally, and at every stage of their lives
- Supporting children and families in the early years to develop confidence in using the Welsh language
- Supporting the wider use of the Welsh language and celebrating Welsh culture in the community, including workplaces
- Developing a culture and ethos that encourages daily use of the Welsh language by elected members and council staff, and providing training and social opportunities to develop their confidence in using the Welsh language
- Developing the services available at the Welsh Language Centre in St Asaph for the benefit of the wider community.

The Welsh Language Planning Centre (laith.cyf) was commissioned to write a report on the success of our current Strategy in accordance with Standard 146, and produced a comprehensive report which included useful recommendations for the next Strategy.

We have been collaborating closely with different departments within the Council and the County Welsh Language Forum in order to ensure that the Strategy is ambitious and follows the recommendations made by the Welsh Language Planning Centre. We shall publish the report alongside our Welsh Language Strategy in the coming months.

Denbighshire Libraries Service Welsh Language Activities

Bookstart Denbighshire

The Bookstart sessions have continued to grow in popularity with 12,588 parents and children attending Rhymetimes during the year – all sessions are naturally bilingual and introduce Welsh songs and nursery rhymes to families.

This provision is central to the pre-school strategy within the County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and is often the first encounter with the Welsh language for families with young babies. In a survey, 49% of the parents stated that they felt more confident with the Welsh language due to attending the Bookstart Rhymetime with their toddlers. We also received these comments from parents.

'Book start is fantastic and we look forward to it every week. I have been coming now for 6 weeks and my baby is 10 weeks old, she stops feeding as soon as story and singing

starts. My husband is first language Welsh and I am learning, Bookstart is really helping me learn new phrases and rhymes to sing together at home'.

'The fact that the sessions are an hour long (most baby classes last approx. half an hour) and are free is amazing! We also enjoy celebrating the different holidays. As someone who speaks little Welsh I find it really helpful for my baby to hear Welsh being spoken, and for me to learn the Welsh rhymes and songs.'

'We love coming to the library sessions! It has encouraged us to use the library more and even I have started borrowing books again something I haven't done for years!

I also love the sign language and Welsh language aspect and am now thinking of enrolling my child in a Welsh speaking school, something I might not have considered had it not been for the exposure to the language in the sessions.'

We also launched our brand new baby book, Siarad Babi: Du a Gwyn / Baby Talk: Black and White, which will be gifted to all newborn babies by health visitors.

Welsh Reading Groups

Corwen and Llangollen have monthly groups, and this year the Llangollen Group were visited by author Haf Llewellyn. Sgwrs a Sangria continue to meet bi-monthly at Denbigh Library, and Ruthin Library has two Welsh medium groups, Cylch darllen llyfrgell Rhuthun meets monthly on a Tuesday afternoon and Llyfr a Llymed meets bi monthly on a Tuesday evening.

Conversation Group

There are now regular Paned a Sgwrs sessions in Rhyl, Denbigh and Rhuddlan. These are informal conversation groups which encourage people to use their Welsh and have a chat over a cup of tea or coffee.

Summer Reading Challenge 2023: Ready Set Read

An increase was seen in the number of children participating in the bilingual reading challenge, with a total of 2,478 children taking part. Over 5,500 Welsh children's books were borrowed in the course of the Challenge. A Welsh website was available to support the challenge again this year (funded by the Welsh Government) in order for children to take part virtually too. Local Welsh medium schools get involved too, for example, Ysgol Caer Drewyn visited Corwen Library and Ysgol Y Llys visited Prestatyn Library.

Ti a Fi / Clwb Cwtsh / Welsh for Children

Cymraeg I Blant run regular sessions for children at St Asaph Library, and there are Ti a Fi groups (Mudiad Meithrin) in Rhyl Library and Prestatyn Library.

Author events

In June novelist Haf Llewelyn visited Denbigh Library to celebrate the release of her new novel, Salem, as part of the Denbigh Midsummer Festival.

In October Denbigh held an evening with author Sian Rees to discuss her third novel, Adar Mud.

During the Easter holidays we invited children's author Leisa Mererid into Prestatyn, Denbigh and Ruthin to run bilingual sessions for families, which involved stories, movement and song.

Welsh book loans

21,603 Welsh items (books, audiobooks and DVDs) were borrowed in 2023-24, an increase of 10% compared to 19,521 the previous year. Of these 70% were children's books, which demonstrates the substantial contribution made by local libraries to the Council's aim to increase the number of children who use the language and receive their education through the medium of Welsh. With only two Welsh bookshops in the county, the local library is a significant source of Welsh books in the community for children and adults.

World Book Day

Every year libraries celebrate World Book Day by giving out thousands of free World Book Day vouchers. This year our libraries also gave out free books, including a selection of Welsh titles which were donated to us by Siop Y Siswrn. The aim of World Book Day is to encourage children and young people to discover the pleasures of reading by ensuring that every individual is given a chance to own their own book.

Welsh Digital Libraries

In partnership with all other library services in Wales, the National Library of Wales, the Welsh Books Council and Welsh Government, library users have access to a range of digital reading resources (e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines) which may be downloaded

free of charge. In 2023-24 there were over 4400 Adult Welsh eBooks and audiobooks, and over 5400 Welsh children's and young adult titles available to download on Borrowbox.

Welsh Language Service

65% of staff within the service can speak Welsh and a Welsh language service is provided in every library. Staff are supported to learn the language and develop their skills.

Workforce Planning

All services are expected to create a Workforce Planning document and to consider whether or not they have a sufficient number of Welsh speakers in order to provide a fully bilingual service. The service is also subject to challenge from the Senior Management Team and councillors in relation to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language Standards require the Council, in its annual monitoring report, to report upon a number of key performance indicators. A summary of this information is provided below.

Compliance with the Service Delivery standards

- We have communicated with staff in regard to responding to correspondence, arranging meetings, social media, e-mails and answering the telephone.
- We have reminded all staff regularly to give people the option to be transferred to a Welsh speaker when contacting the Council.
- We have provided wording for staff to include in letter templates, giving residents the chance to ask for all future correspondence in Welsh.
- We have included a message within the Contact Centre's automated response to state that a Welsh language line is available.
- We make a record if a person wishes to receive correspondence from us in Welsh, and correspond with that person in Welsh only in future.
- We have notified staff who arrange public meetings that all invites / publicity must be bilingual, that simultaneous translators should be arranged for all public

meetings 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.
- We have included a statement on our templates for Welsh/English forms and documents to state that they are also available in English/Welsh.
- The interface and menus on every page of our website are bilingual.
- We respond in Welsh to every grant application form received in Welsh.
- Signs have been placed in main reception areas to state that people are welcome to communicate through the medium of Welsh.
- All our signs are in Welsh and are checked for accuracy.
- We have added further guidance to provide greater clarity on how to submit a complaint in relation to the Welsh language.

Compliance with the Operational Standards

- We have introduced a Human Resources process whereby all are asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh.
- We have included a table within our application forms to gauge the Welsh language skills of each applicant.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence in relation to their employment, addressed to them personally, in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive paper correspondence in relation to their training needs or requirements in Welsh.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents describing their performance objectives in Welsh, and we provide documents in Welsh if they wish.
- We have asked all staff whether they wish to receive documents describing their career plan in Welsh, and we provide documents in Welsh if they wish.
- We ask all staff whether they wish to receive forms that record and authorise annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours in Welsh.
- Staff may submit complaints in Welsh through the corporate complaints procedure and all staff have been notified of this.
- The Council's existing Corporate Complaints Procedure enables staff to submit complaints in Welsh and to respond to complaints about them in Welsh. Staff have been notified of these rights.

- All staff are given the opportunity to ask that any meetings involving complaints against them are conducted in Welsh (with or without a translator).
- A record of every decision regarding a complaint made against a member of staff is published in Welsh (and any subsequent meeting is held in Welsh).
- Our HR policies state that staff can respond in Welsh to any allegations made against them.
- Computer software to check spelling and grammar has been provided to all staff who speak or are learning Welsh along with Welsh language interfaces for software such as Microsoft Word and Outlook.
- We have translated the text of our intranet homepage to Welsh.
- All pages on the intranet which have a corresponding Welsh version include a link to that Welsh page.
- Pages have been created on the intranet to provide services and support resources in order to promote the Welsh language and assist staff to use Welsh.
- The interface and menus on the intranet are in Welsh.
- The Council has conducted an assessment of its staff's Welsh language skills by way of self-assessment under the new Framework.
- The Council promotes all opportunities for staff to attend basic Welsh language courses during working hours.
- The Council provides the opportunity for staff who wish to continue beyond the basic Welsh language training to receive 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 members of staff.
- We have provided wording for staff to use on their e-mail signature, to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or learners.
- We have created a new self-assessment document to measure services' performance in relation to the Welsh Language Standards. All Council departments have completed the questionnaire which asked about their level of compliance with the Standards, which gives us a comprehensive picture of compliance throughout the Council and an awareness of where strengths/weaknesses lie and where the standards need to be reinforced.

Compliance with the Policymaking Standards

- We have advised managers to consider the impact, if any (whether positive or negative), the policy decision would have on opportunities for staff to use the Welsh language, and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English.
- When a new policy is formulated or revised, we ensure that all managers are aware of the need to consider the effects of policy decisions on the Welsh Language.
- 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 produced a policy on awarding grants in order to assist officers in ensuring that the above considerations form an integral part of the Denbighshire County Council grants process.

Complaints

Area of Standards	Complaints received directly
Service delivery	1
Policymaking	0
Operational	0

Date	Complaint	Details	Action taken
Awst 2023	1. Complainant received an English response to a complaint made in Welsh.	The complainant spoke to a member of staff in Welsh asking them to record a specific request. When the request was recorded in the C360 system, it was made in English	Each manager in the Council were contacted and reminded that staff need to choose the correct language option in the C360 software when they make a note of complaints / requests and managers reminded all staff of this.

Date	Complaint	Details	Action taken
September 2023	2. An investigation by the Language Commissioner under section 71 of the Welsh Language Measure against Denbighshire Leisure Limited (DLL)	<p>rather than Welsh which then led to an English response. It is necessary to change the language selection within the software to ensure that the request is recorded in the desired language.</p> <p>A complaint was received on 6 September from a member of the public to the Language Commissioner about the DLL website about English-only swimming timetables.</p> <p>On 11 September, the Council was informed and the Language Officer contacted DLL asking them to check the error. By 4 October, the matter was raised again as the work had not been completed. It was agreed by DLL that the work would be completed by 18 October, but the work was not completed and more non-compliant timetables and non-compliant social media posts were discovered.</p> <p>An official investigation was opened and the Council responded to the investigation on 8 April 2024.</p>	<p>DLL has corrected technical errors within its website and social media scheduling programme to ensure that messages and pages are posted bilingually every time.</p> <p>The Council has reminded DLL of its responsibilities in terms of social media and website in accordance with paragraph 8.9 and 8.1 of the Welsh Language Policy:</p> <p>Social Media</p> <p>8.9 When using social media, we should not treat Welsh less favorably than English.</p> <p>This means:</p> <p>(a) You should either have separate Welsh and English accounts or a bilingual account</p> <p>(b) Any messages placed on English-only accounts should be placed in another account in Welsh at the exact same time.</p> <p>(c) Any messages on bilingual accounts should be</p>

Date	Complaint	Details	Action taken
			<p>posted in Welsh and in English at the same time</p> <p>(d) If you have a bilingual account rather than a separate Welsh and English account, the name of the account needs to be bilingual as well, with the Welsh first and the English afterwards. (Standard 58)</p> <p>8.10 If someone contacts you via social media in Welsh, reply in Welsh as well. (Standard 59)</p> <p>Websites</p> <p>8.1 Must ensure:</p> <p>(a) that the text of every page on any website for which the Council is responsible is available in Welsh and English,</p> <p>(b) that all Welsh pages on any website we have are fully operational, and</p> <p>(c) that the Welsh language is not treated less favorably than English on any website we have (Standard 52)</p> <p>8.2 On any website that the Council is responsible for, it must be ensured that it is possible to change from one language to another through a button that can change from the Welsh page to the same page in English and vice versa completely hassle-free. (Standard 52)</p> <p>8.3 The interface and menus on every page on any website for which the Council is responsible must be in Welsh and English. (Standard 56)</p>

Date	Complaint	Details	Action taken
	<p>3.</p> <p>Complainant received an English only response to a query in Welsh</p>	<p>A Lead Member responded to a Welsh language email saying he didn't understand Welsh so wouldn't be able to answer the query.</p>	<p>The Council regularly monitors social media and the DLL website to ensure that they comply with the Welsh Language Standards and our Welsh Language Policy. If there are any concerns, these are raised directly with the company.</p> <p>Moving forward and once DLL has established its annual assessment, as part of our process for ensuring compliance, we will request copies of their annual Welsh Language assessment for consideration by the Council.</p> <p>A response was given in Welsh to the original inquiry.</p> <p>The Corporate Director and the Lead Member with responsibility for the Welsh language spoke to the Lead Member and reminded him of his responsibilities in terms of complying with the requirements of the Language Policy.</p> <p>In addition, there is an intention to hold a workshop with all members of the Council to raise awareness about the Welsh language.</p>

Employees' Welsh Language Skills

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

Corporate Outcomes only (excluding schools)

Level	Listening and speaking		Reading and comprehension		Writing	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Level 0	299	12.00	392	15.73	602	24.16
Level 1	840	33.71	803	32.22	643	25.80
Level 2	261	10.47	208	8.35	248	9.95
Level 3	129	5.18	128	5.14	123	4.94
Level 4	145	5.82	158	6.34	99	3.97
Level 5	142	5.70	135	5.42	109	37.33
No information	676	27.13	668	26.81	668	26.81
Total	2492		2492		2492	

Listening and speaking skills by Service (excluding schools)

Service	Level 0		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Level 5		No information	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	90	3.61	177	7.10	53	2.13	28	1.12	28	1.12	23	0.92	164	6.58
Corporate Support - People	9	0.36	41	1.65	14	0.56	7	0.28	13	0.52	13	0.52	20	0.80
Corporate Support - Performance, Digital and Assets	18	0.72	52	2.09	22	0.88	11	0.44	10	0.40	11	0.44	12	0.48
Education and Children	36	1.44	101	4.05	41	1.65	18	0.72	22	0.09	28	1.12	126	5.06
Finance and Audit	2	0.08	28	1.12	6	0.24	5	0.20	5	0.20	6	0.24	48	1.93
Highways, Facilities and Environmental	113	4.53	275	11.03	57	2.29	33	1.32	25	1.00	21	0.84	197	7.91
Housing and Communities	24	0.96	87	3.49	33	1.32	16	0.64	26	1.04	22	0.88	37	1.48
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	31	1.24	79	3.17	35	1.40	11	0.44	16	0.64	18	0.72	72	2.89
Total	299	12.00	840	33.71	261	10.47	129	5.18	145	5.82	142	5.70	676	27.13

Reading and Comprehension Skills

Service	Level 0		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Level 5		No information	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	116	4.65	164	6.58	42	1.69	24	0.96	27	1.08	27	1.08	162	6.50
Corporate Support - People	12	0.48	31	1.24	11	0.44	9	0.36	13	0.52	14	0.56	18	0.72
Corporate Support - Performance, Digital and Assets	17	0.68	58	2.33	18	0.72	6	0.24	12	0.48	11	0.44	12	0.48
Education and Children	41	1.65	101	4.05	33	1.32	19	0.76	29	1.16	23	0.92	124	4.97
Finance and Audit	4	0.16	25	1.00	7	0.28	3	0.12	8	0.32	5	0.20	46	1.85
Highways, Facilities and Environmental	130	5.22	261	10.47	53	2.13	29	1.16	26	1.04	19	0.76	197	7.91
Housing and Communities	31	1.24	88	3.53	17	0.68	25	1.00	24	0.96	21	0.84	37	1.48
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	41	1.65	75	3.01	27	1.08	13	0.52	19	0.76	15	0.60	72	2.89
Total	392	15.73	803	32.22	208	8.35	128	5.14	158	6.34	135	5.42	668	26.81

Writing Skills

Service	Level 0		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Level 5		No information	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Adult Social Care and Homelessness	172	6.90	111	4.45	84	3.37	23	0.92	15	0.60	18	0.72	162	6.50
Corporate Support - People	24	0.96	29	1.16	14	0.56	10	0.40	9	0.36	9	0.36	18	0.72
Corporate Support - Performance, Digital and Assets	40	1.61	42	1.69	16	0.64	5	0.20	8	0.32	11	0.44	12	0.48
Education and Children	67	2.69	85	3.41	31	1.24	20	0.80	11	0.44	22	0.88	124	4.97
Finance and Audit	15	0.61	17	0.68	8	0.32	4	0.16	6	0.24	2	0.08	46	1.85
Highways, Facilities and Environmental	158	6.34	233	9.35	50	2.01	28	1.12	20	0.80	17	0.68	197	7.91
Housing and Communities	60	2.41	65	2.61	23	0.92	22	0.88	17	0.68	18	0.72	37	1.48
Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	66	2.65	61	2.45	22	0.88	11	0.44	13	0.52	12	0.48	72	2.89
Total	602	24.16	643	25.80	248	9.95	123	4.94	99	3.97	109	4.37	668	26.81

Welsh Language Skills Framework

We continue to operate the Framework which is a simple way for staff to self-assess their language skills based on the type of communication tasks (reading, writing, speaking and comprehension) they can perform through the medium of Welsh. This is an effective way of monitoring the skill levels necessary for the post and what courses workers may need in order to progress to the next level. Following this framework enables us to support learners on their language journey and achieve the best possible outcomes.

Welsh Lessons

The table below shows the number of Council staff members who attended Welsh lessons as part of the 'Working Welsh' scheme provided by the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

Level	Number
Taster Course	0
Entry	21
Foundation	3
Intermediate	0
Advanced	0
Self-study	8
Total	32

10-hour Welsh taster courses are available online for those who want to start their language journey. These courses introduce everyday vocabulary and phrases and are available to everyone, free of charge. Some courses are tailored for various sectors such as health, care, public services, teachers, head teachers, tourism, retail, Welsh tourism, the Women's Institute and information about the Welsh language tailored for Childcare Providers.

Progress with the 'More Than Just Words' framework

Within Denbighshire Social Services there is a clear commitment to improve services to ensure that the Welsh language is a key element of care, including services provided by

the independent sector. This work has been guided by the Mwy na Geiriau Framework (2022-27)

We continue to promote the Welsh language within Adults and Children's services at induction sessions for new staff. In addition, staff are regularly reminded of the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. We share the details of the Welsh language awareness e-learning module which has been developed by Social Care Wales for workers and students in social care who wish to learn more about the Welsh language, culture and working bilingually [using-welsh-at-work](#). We have also commissioned Courtesy level Welsh skills courses for staff and also promote a range of language training opportunities (Work Welsh courses and also the [Camau-welsh-course](#)). In addition, the Adult Services team have participated in the *Arfer Prosiect* which is delivered by Bangor University and aims to offer opportunities for staff to increase their confidence in using their Welsh language skills.

The steps that Denbighshire's Adult Services team have implemented during 2023-24 include undertaking an audit of how services currently meet the needs of Welsh speakers, alongside work to ensure improvement and sharing of best practice in providing the 'active offer'. The Contracts and Commissioning team have also undertaken an audit of Denbighshire care providers in order to assess to what extent they are meeting the requirements of the Mwy na Geiriau 'active offer'. An information sharing session is planned for a future Provider event in order to share examples of best practice, together with sharing of resources and information.

Finally, we have continued to increase the sector's awareness of the Active offer. Posters, lanyards and stickers are distributed as well as the newly produced resources which have been produced by the North Wales Regional Partnership Board with input from the North Wales Mwy Na Geiriau Forum <https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/regional-priorities/mwynageiriau-morethanwords>

Welsh in Education Strategic Group Update

Outcome 1

Action: - More nursery / three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.

Increase the availability of Welsh medium places

Provision before school age

Canolfan y Dderwen has established and accepts children in September. The Center has appointed a leader for the new Cylch Meithrin and 2 electric minibuses are already transporting children to Ysgol Dewi Sant.

The situation at Ysgol Dewi Sant is a problem beyond the authority's ability to solve due to sewerage and water supply problems. The Council will not get planning permission on the site until the work is resolved by Dŵr Cymru.

Construction work has started at Ysgol Twm o'r Nant hoping to finish by the end of the Summer.

An application/presentation to declare interest to the Welsh Government on other projects for pre-school provision has been made.

Promoting bilingualism and Welsh education

The education department pages on [Denbighshire County Council's website have been updated to promote Welsh-medium education](#). There is a lot of information on the website about the benefits of Welsh education, where to get help, the Welsh schools, support for latecomers and immersion classes.

Information about the benefits of Welsh education is also regularly shared on the county's other digital platforms.

Postcards are produced in partnership with Menter Iaith in order to share information about the benefits of being bilingual and Welsh education. The cards will be distributed to relevant stakeholders e.g. health visitors, midwives, Mudiad Meithrin, schools etc. There will be QR codes on the cards so that prospective parents can access the latest information about Welsh education and bilingualism.

Outcome 2

Action: - More reception class / five-year-old children receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Increase capacity in Welsh Medium Schools

The County has received a capital grant to develop/create extensions to 4 Welsh-medium primary schools (Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch, Ysgol Bro Elwern, Ysgol Henllan and Ysgol Tremeirchion). These plans need to be implemented to design and tender contractors, but first, funding needs to be secured and the projects need to go to the internal capital group that scrutinizes new projects.

Challenges have arisen which are slowing down the work on developing the Ysgol y Gwernant building - the Llangollen & Dee area is a 'phosphate vulnerable zone' which limits planning permission. The second challenge is that construction costs have increased by 20% in the last year. The modernising education department will continue to work on these challenges to ensure that the work takes place.

Following a series of meetings with headteachers and governors of 6 English-medium primary schools, to map their language and linguistic journey, six schools have indicated in PLASC that they are T2 schools - Carrog, Caer Drewyn, Dyffryn Yâl, Bryn Clwyd, Frongoch, Esgob Morgan.

It was suggested to the governors of the County's only C2 school, that the school should be a category T3 school and plan to be a fully Welsh school within a specified period. It was noted that Ysgol Llanfair will remain a category 2 school but will put arrangements in place that the foundation phase learners receive their education only through the medium of Welsh. This year is the first year that this has been implemented for the nursery class.

Feasibility work will begin in the summer term looking at the demand for a Welsh-medium primary school in the north of the County.

Outcome 3

Action: - More children continue to improve their Welsh skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.

The team continues to coordinate activities, training and create and share learning resources so that learners continue to improve their Welsh skills across all sectors.

A bank of resources has been created by officers for Welsh medium school teachers. The resources include tasks and activities to develop children's oral skills and greatly reduce the workload of teachers. We are also working closely with officials from Conwy County to jointly plan a programme of support for teachers.

Officers are also part of the school planning process as they map out how to develop the Welsh language in their institutions.

There is a very flexible model of supporting latecomers in the county, which provides daily support to the learners. The number receiving support has grown every term this year - Autumn - 5 pupils, Spring - 6 pupils and Summer - 7 pupils. The Welsh-medium schools are encouraged to inform that support is available for latecomers via their communication platforms.

Ysgol Brynhyfryd plans to open an immersion class after the building work is completed. The County has received a capital grant to develop an immersion unit and the authority will work closely with the school to drive the plan forward.

Outcome 4

Action: - More learners studying for Welsh qualifications (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

The two two-stream secondary schools are Category 2 schools under the new categorization system. Discussions continue to increase the number of subjects taught through Welsh in these two schools.

Networking meetings for English and Welsh medium secondary schools are developing well.

Work is ongoing to create a solid transition programme across the county and to raise the question with parents in year 5 regarding which stream / secondary school the pupils want to choose.

It is necessary to reinforce the message and the expectation that children receive Welsh education from nursery to 16+.

15 pupils have registered for the immersion class at Ysgol Glan Clwyd.

Outcome 5

Action: - More opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts at school.

In the absence of a national framework, it was decided to create a Cymraeg Campus framework for Denbighshire. The framework has been created and shared with the co-ordinators and management teams of the 7 secondary schools that introduce Welsh as a second language. The 7 schools are committed to implementing CC to develop the Welsh language. There are resources available and support for schools to receive the bronze, silver and gold award. Ysgol Uwchradd Denbigh has already managed to win the bronze award.

The Government will launch new guidelines for the Cymraeg Campus Language Charter in June.

There is a great deal of buzz and Welsh language activities in the schools as part of the Language Charter / Cymraeg Campus activities.

Children's oral development training with the county's Welsh language school teachers is developing effectively.

The council collaborates very closely with the partners such as the Urdd, and Menter Iaith, to jointly plan a work program and coordinate activities that will support priorities in this plan.

Outcome 6

Action step: - Increase in Welsh medium education provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties set out by the Additional Learning Needs Act and the Education Tribunal (Wales) 2018)

A lot of work has been done in this outcome to gather information about the support through the Welsh language for learners with additional learning needs.

Questionnaires were shared with the County's ALN departments, special schools and ALN coordinators in Welsh schools. After analysing the responses, the main message was that the authority succeeds in providing support through the Welsh language to ALN learners and that there is an offer through the Welsh language for learners in a number of different areas. The authority's ALN staff offer a bilingual service, the special schools offer bilingual education and support and ALN coordinators of the county's Welsh language schools

receive good support from the county. Despite this, the lack of Welsh language resources is a problem and recruiting staff who can speak Welsh is very challenging.

Information about ALN provision through the medium of Welsh has been updated on Denbighshire County Council's website.

Outcome 7

Action: - Increase in the number of teaching staff who can teach Welsh (as a subject) and can teach through the medium of Welsh

The Welsh Language Support Team and the region continue to develop training programmes for staff in schools on Welsh pedagogy and teaching methods.

All schools have now received the grant money to develop the workforce. These projects will need to be evaluated at the end of the year.

It is necessary to collate all the information about opportunities to learn Welsh on one platform, which is easy to understand and for all levels and to collaborate with Denbighshire's Welsh Language Officer.

It is necessary to collaborate with the Welsh Government and receive training on how to make the best use of the SWAC survey.

We are in contact with officials from Dysgu Cymraeg, who are currently planning national programmes to train the workforce to learn to speak Welsh.