

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET EQUALITY COMMITTEE

13 DECEMBER 2010

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT &
PARTNERSHIPS**

**HALF-YEARLY REPORT – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL’S WELSH
LANGUAGE SCHEME 2008-2011**

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress with implementing the Council’s Welsh Language Scheme 2008-2011.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

- 2.1 The Welsh Language Scheme is a statutory scheme on a cross-cutting issue, and therefore impacts upon the work of the whole council. It is linked to the equality agenda, and is a key component in delivering the council’s Customer Care Programme.

3. Background.

- 3.1 On 10 September 2008, the Council approved the revised Welsh Language Scheme 2008-2011. The revised Scheme aims to address areas of development suggested by the Welsh Language Board, based on statutory guidance issued by them.
- 3.2 The Welsh Language Board suggested that the council must demonstrate improvement in the following key areas:
- The production of a bilingual website
 - Bilingual job advertising
 - Staff development (i.e. training to support availability of Welsh-speaking staff in key services)
 - Performance monitoring.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Progress in the current financial year is outlined in Appendix A; this includes all milestones for 2010-11, plus milestones that have slipped from previous financial years.

The Council has made particular progress in the following areas:

- **Website** – significant resources have been devoted to producing a bilingual website, which is now functional.

- **Skills Strategy** – this is a “working document” to implement staffing aspects of the Welsh Language Scheme. It has been finalised in consultation with the Welsh Language Board.
- **Training & development** – a training needs survey was conducted with managers across the organisation. Further to this, a number of Members and staff have enrolled on courses for learners, and a focus group was recently conducted with fluent staff to explore their development needs.

The Council has also co-operated with the Welsh Language Board to assist them with their compliance checks of bilingual public notices, bilingual websites and bilingual elections literature. The council has also responded to consultation exercises by the Welsh Language Board and Welsh Assembly Government.

Full details can be found at Appendix A.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 This is a progress report and therefore has no direct effect.

6. Equality Impact Assessment.

6.1 This report details how the council is complying with the Welsh Language Act 1993. In doing so, the council is ensuring that in delivering services it treats English and Welsh on a basis of equality, responds to the needs of Welsh speakers, and promotes positive attitudes towards the Welsh language in the workplace and in the community.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 This is a progress report and therefore has no direct financial implications. Actions in the Welsh Language Scheme are being funded from existing resources, as noted in the report to Council on 10th September 2008.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 The Committee is recommended to note the progress being made in implementing the Welsh Language Scheme action plan.

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Background documents

Bridgend County Borough Council Welsh Language Scheme, 2008-2011

Welsh Language Act 1993.

Welsh Language Scheme Revision – Advice for Local Authorities 2005 (Welsh Language Board).