

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

5 SEPTEMBER 2017

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN: CURRENT POSITION

##### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report is to inform Cabinet of the progress made on the Bridgend 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan' (WESP).

##### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 The WESP supports the following corporate priorities:

2.2

- Supporting a successful economy
- Smarter use of resources

##### 3. Background

- 3.1 There is a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare and introduce and monitor progress of a WESP. Local authorities must take all reasonable steps to implement their approved WESPs. There is also a requirement to review progress against the targets set out in the plan and to submit a revised plan for approval by the Welsh Ministers. This must be done by 20 December each year. Bridgend's WESP was submitted on time.

- 3.2 Cabinet approved the Bridgend Local Authority WESP in March 2014 and it was subsequently approved by Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in June 2014. The plan has been reviewed and updated annually prior to seeking approval from Welsh Government. Due process has been followed to this effect but Welsh Government has not yet approved any local authority WESPs this year and consequently the timetable has had to be adjusted this year.

##### 4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 Welsh Government issued new guidance for the next WESP, 2017-2020 in August 2016. There is a clear intent to link the work of the WESPs to the Welsh Language Standards and to drive local authorities towards Welsh Government's stated aim of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The template is a more concise document with a requirement to specify aims and objectives to meet each of the seven outcomes:

**Outcome 1:** More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh

**Outcome 2:** More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school

**Outcome 3:** More students aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

**Outcome 4:** More students aged 14-19 in studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning

**Outcome 5:** More students with advanced skills in Welsh

**Outcome 6:** Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

**Outcome 7:** Workforce planning and continuing professional development.

- 4.2 The plan was presented to the specified consultees for consultation on 2 November 2016 and submitted to Welsh Government on 20 December 2016. Modifications were made following responses to the consultation. Like all other local authorities, Bridgend's WESP has not yet been formally approved by Welsh Government.
- 4.3 All local authority WESPs were the subject of a 'rapid review' by Aled Roberts (Welsh Government appointee) in April 2017. This has resulted in a revision to Welsh Government timetables for approval and publication of the plans. The Minister has made it clear he expects strong and ambitious plans. The growth of Welsh-medium education will be one of the key drivers for achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The review was published on 4 August 2017. The review provides key findings and recommendations for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.
- 4.4 The local authority has received a request for further information and modifications to targets, to make them more specific. A revised plan will be submitted to Welsh Government by no later than 29 September 2017. Once the plan has been finalised in consultation with identified stakeholders it will be returned to Welsh Government. Once it has been granted Welsh Government approval, it will be presented to Cabinet to seek approval for publication. It is estimated that this will occur by December 2017.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 The WESP is designed to deliver the key principles of equality, choice and opportunity for all. An Initial Screening EIA has been undertaken on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which indicates that a full EIA will be required over the next 12 months which will provide monitoring data on which to base further decisions regarding the detail of the WESP.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 Local authorities are expected to work with their regional consortia to demonstrate how the Education Improvement Grant administered by the consortium will support the implementation of the WESP.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the content of this report.

**Lindsay Harvey**

**Interim Corporate Director – Education and Family Support**

**September 2017**

**Contact Officer:** Sue Roberts

**Telephone:** (01656) 754892

**e-mail:** [Susan.Roberts2@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:Susan.Roberts2@bridgend.gov.uk)

**Postal Address** Education and Family Support Directorate  
Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB

### **Background documents**

- Cabinet Report: Welsh In Education Strategic Partnership, 4 March 2014
- Cabinet Report: Welsh In Education Strategic Partnership, 28 April 2015
- Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening
- Rapid Review accessed via:  
<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/allsectorpolicies/welshmededuca/rapid-review-of-the-welsh-in-education-strategic-plans/?lang=en>