

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

19 DECEMBER 2017

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

#### WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the progress made on the Bridgend 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan' (WESP) and to seek approval of the publication of the document in line with Welsh Government requirements.

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

- 2.1 The WESP supports the corporate priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Smarter use of resources

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The Act places a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare and introduce and monitor progress of a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Under section 85(7) of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 local authorities must take all reasonable steps to implement their approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. The 2013 Regulations also require a local authority to review progress against the targets set out in its plan and to submit a revised plan for approval by the Welsh Ministers. This must be done by 20 December each year.
- 3.2 Cabinet first 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.
- 3.3 Following the rapid review commissioned by Welsh Government the timescales for publication of the WESP documents have been reviewed, as reported in Cabinet report (5 September 2017).

#### 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 very clear 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 study 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 other local authorities, Bridgend's WESP has not yet been formally approved by Welsh Government.

4.3 The Plan was the subject of a 'rapid review' by Aled Roberts (Welsh Government appointee) on 18 April 2017. Further information and modifications to targets, to make them more specific, were requested and have now been included in the Plan in consultation with Welsh Government.

4.4 It is advised that Welsh Government will seek to approve all plans by the end of January 2018, subject to approval processes within local authorities.

## **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 Equality Impact Assessment (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 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the new WESP and authorise publication of the revised WESP on the BCBC website from 1 June 2018.

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**Date: 08 December 2017**

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### **Background documents**

Cabinet Report: Welsh In Education Strategic Plan: Current Position, 5 September 2017

### **Appendix A**

WESP 2017-20 (revised draft, v0.5)