

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2018

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES DIRECTORATE

WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY: ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet Equalities Committee on the work undertaken to meet the objectives within the Welsh Language Five Year Strategy (2016 to 2021), during the second year since its introduction.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced Welsh Language Standards which impact upon the work of the whole council. The standards link to the equalities agenda, form a key component of the council's Transformation Programme and Customer Charter, and link to the following corporate priorities:
- Priority 2: Helping people to be more self-reliant; enabling people to use the language of their choice by ensuring our systems and front line services are delivered bilingually. Ensuring that bilingual systems enable people to better equipped to manage situations themselves and the council services can concentrate on those in greatest need.
 - Priority 3: Smarter use of resources; ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 The council's final compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner includes two standards (145 and 146) that require the council to have produced and published a Five Year Strategy by 30 September 2016. The strategy, which is attached as **appendix 1**, sets out how the council will promote the Welsh language and facilitate its use in Bridgend County Borough for the period covered by the strategy. The strategy includes:
- a target (in terms of the percentage of Welsh speakers in Bridgend County Borough) for maintaining the number of Welsh speakers by the end of the five year period;
 - a statement setting out how the council intends to maintain that target. The council is also required to review the strategy and publish a revised version on its website within five years of publishing the initial strategy.
- 3.2 Five years after publishing the strategy the council must:
- assess to what extent it has followed the strategy and reached the target;

- publish an assessment on its website, containing:
 - the number of Welsh speakers in the Bridgend area and the ages of those speakers;
 - a list of activities that have been arranged or funded during the five years to promote use of the Welsh language.

3.3 It was agreed that the strategy would be split into two sections, section one to address our employees and section two for our public. The following individual objectives were agreed:

3.3.1 Section one: employees

- Objective 1: Identify the capacity in service areas to deliver services in Welsh.
- Objective 2: Provide appropriate learning and development solutions at various levels to meet identified needs within budget allocation.
- Objective 3: Establish arrangements in recruiting to positions where Welsh language skills are essential.

3.3.2 Section two: the public

- Objective 1: Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way.
- Objective 2: Increase promotion and awareness of the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) particularly in relation to objectives one, two and four of the WESP plan.
- Objective three: to explore (and implement where possible) any new activities which will support the use of the Welsh language more widely within the county borough, promoting these accordingly.

A series of actions sit underneath each objective. A copy of the strategy is attached as appendix 1.

3.4 Internally it was agreed that we would report on the strategy to Cabinet Equalities Committee on an annual basis rather than just report at the end of the five-year period. This would give us opportunity to identify any gaps and keep developments and activities on track. An annual report of the first year was submitted to Cabinet Equalities Committee at the November 2017 meeting to cover the period of October 2016 to September 2017.

4. Current situation / proposal

Since the last annual report the following developments during October 2017 and September 2018 can be noted:

4.1 General developments:

- A meeting took place with an organisation called Nico who were commissioned by the Welsh Language Commissioner's office to produce an overview of council's strategies with the aim of this feeding into a guidance document for local authorities to help them to develop and measure the impact of their five year strategies. A recent update from the commissioner's office indicates this guidance document will be available soon. As part of the meeting some best practice was shared for

example capturing population statistics on Welsh-medium education and reporting on this as part of our measurement activities.

- The WESP plan was approved in July 2018 and as a result there are slight changes to the wording of some of the actions that cross over into the five year strategy. These amends have been highlighted in appendix one in italics and will be updated following this meeting.
- Further discussions have taken place with Menter Bro Ogwr which has altered the previously agreed actions. These can be summarised as:

Previous agreed actions	Changes
BCBC to work with MBO to advertise Welsh-essential jobs on their website and Facebook page;	No change
MBO to continue working with Halo and Awen Trust to provide recreational courses through the medium of Welsh for adults in Bridgend;	Changed to: MBO to continue working with us or our partners (where applicable) to provide Welsh medium activities in leisure and culture.
BCBC to promote public Siop Siarad sessions among staff via the intranet.	Siop siarad has now closed so links to this have been removed from the council's learning and development website and this is no longer promoted.

4.2 Employee developments:

4.2.1 Objective 1: Identify the capacity in service areas to deliver services in Welsh

- Actions have been taken to increase the level of employee data held in the human resources integrated system.
- A Welsh language assessment tool has been developed to help managers further understand the linguistic skills and development needs of their team so future training can be more targeted. This was piloted in customer services during 17/18. Planning is now in place to roll out this tool to other reception areas.
- Assessment of Welsh language skills required for new and vacant posts has taken place.
- Actions have been taken to monitor the demand for Welsh services in the Telephone Contact Centre and Customer Contact Centre.

4.2.2 Objective 2: Provide appropriate learning and development solutions at various levels to meet identified needs within budget allocation

- Awareness of Welsh language in the workplace has been raised by promoting two new e-learning modules: Welsh Language Standards and Welsh language awareness.
- Welsh language 'meet and greet' workshops are run for staff to ensure they can meet and greet customers. During this period (October 2017 to September 2018), 22 employees have completed this training.

- A Welsh language training programme is offered to employees at various levels:
 - Cwrs Mynediad/Mynediad blwyddyn – Entry Level Year 1 – Year 1 (Sept 2017 to June 2018) – 20 enrolled;
 - Cwrs Mynediad/Mynediad blwyddyn – Entry Level Year 1 – Year 1 (Sept 2018 to June 2019) - 10 enrolled;
 - Cwrs Mynediad/Mynediad blwyddyn – Entry Level Year 2 – Year 2 (Sept 2017 to June 2018) – 18 enrolled;
 - Cwrs Mynediad/Mynediad blwyddyn – Entry Level Year 2 – Year 2 (Sept 2018 to June 2019) – 8 enrolled;
 - Cwrs Mynediad/Sylfaen blwyddyn1 – Foundation Level Year 1 – Year 3 (Sept 2018 – June 2019) – 8 enrolled.
- All community-based learning and other learning opportunities are promoted via the council's learning and development website.

4.2.3 Objective 3: Establish arrangements in recruiting to positions where Welsh language skills are essential

- Recruitment and selection guidelines for managers recruiting to Welsh essential posts, examples are included for managers.
- Availability of online recruitment in Welsh so enabling submission of Welsh applications.
- A range of recruitment advertising methods, which target Welsh speakers has been identified and adopted e.g. via Menter Bro Ogwr. Also engagement with Welsh language schools to promote apprenticeship opportunities for Welsh speakers.
- A range of assessment tools in the selection process relating to Welsh language skills is available.

4.3 Public developments:

4.3.1 **Objective 1:** Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way

The rolling calendar of Welsh language activities and events is still in place and details are shared across internal and external communications channels, such as press, social media and Bridgendders, depending on the target audience and nature of the event. During the period the following activities and events have been promoted:

- Commonwealth Games (Welsh team): 4 tweets resulting in 6,239 impressions
- National Eisteddfod: 1 tweet resulting in 1,292 impressions
- Menter Bro Ogwr summer play schemes: 7 tweets resulting in 8,162 impressions
- Ras yr Iaith: 2 tweets resulting in 3524 impressions
- Shwmae Sumae day: 1 tweet resulting in 1,942 impressions
- St David's Day: 1 tweet resulting in 1,950 impressions
- Urdd: 2 tweets resulting in 3,474 impressions

- Urdd summer sports camps: 1 tweet resulting in 1,098 impressions
- Promoting our Welsh language social media accounts: 3 Facebook posts resulting in 8,332 impressions and 5 tweets resulting in 9,241 impressions
- Exam results at Welsh language schools: 4 tweets resulting in 19,958 impressions
- Welsh medium education (including info on new schools): 3 tweets resulting in 11,791 impressions and 1 Facebook post resulting in 26,461 impressions.

4.3.2 **Objective 2:** Increase promotion and awareness of the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) particularly in relation to objectives one, two and four of the WESP plan.

- Following the Welsh Government review of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP), there have been several reviews of WESPs. Following consultation with Welsh Government officials, we have continued to review the plan. Part of these discussions included the Capital Grant bid submitted to Welsh Government in June 2018 which includes plans for the provision of four early years' settings to feed current Welsh-medium primary schools in Bridgend and any future provision (including nursery provision in Bridgend town). The £2.6m Welsh-medium Capital Grant bid has recently been approved by Welsh Government. The four early years' setting are planned for Betws, Ogmores Valley, Porthcawl and Bridgend Town. Officers have started working with stakeholder groups to ensure the future sustainability of the buildings, once constructed.

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

- The authority monitors the transition from nursery to primary provision with the aim to increase numbers entering Welsh-medium provision in early years by **5%** over the next three years

<p>Jan 2016 Number of seven year olds in Welsh medium schools 143 Jan 2017 Number of seven year olds in Welsh medium schools 164</p>

- These figures demonstrate an increase in learners in Welsh-medium primary schools

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

- The authority monitors the transition from primary provision to secondary provision with the aim to improve transition rates **by 10%** between each phase of education and increase retention of children in Welsh-medium education in FP and KS2
- Summer 2016 - there were 122 children in year 6 in the Welsh Primaries in 15/16. The number in year 7 in YGG Llangynwyd in 16/17 was 110
- Summer 17 - there were 119 children in year 6 in the Welsh primaries in 16/17. The number in year 7 in YGG Llangynwyd in 17/18 was 114
- There is a known issue for us where parents make choices about sending their child to a Welsh-medium primary school and then an English-medium secondary

school and it is something that we are working on with plans for a 'Growth and Retention Strategy'.

- In September 2017, full course GCSE Welsh second language became compulsory and there is encouragement for young people to continue learning through Welsh and maintain their language skills.

June 2016 Pupils entered into Welsh language GCSE (short course and full)
Welsh 1st Language 98
Welsh 2nd Language (Full) 585
Welsh 2nd Language (Short) 784

June 2017 Pupils entered into Welsh language GCSE (short course and full)
Welsh 1st Language 99
Welsh 2nd Language (Full) 877
Welsh 2nd Language (Short) 769

- These figures demonstrate an increase in learners engaged in Welsh language GCSEs

Progress on **Outcome 4: More learners' aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh** include:

- There is a close working partnership and collaboration with YGG Llanhari in Rhondda Cynon Taff
- Currently there are 8 collaborative AS courses in Year 12 and 10 collaborative A2 courses in Year 13.
- YGGL in collaboration with YGG Llanhari is able to meet the requirements of the Learning & Skills Measure by offering 30 Level 3 courses including five vocational courses along with the Welsh Baccalaureate. Following choices made by students, the school timetables 23 courses in Year 12 and 26 courses in Year 13 plus the Welsh Baccalaureate.
- We use the results of schools data to improve the provision of Welsh medium education, BCBC undertakes an annual review of Post 16 provision with each sixth form including YGGL

June 2016 Pupils entered into Welsh language A level
Welsh 1st Language 9. Welsh 2nd Language 22

June 2017 Pupils entered into Welsh language A level
Welsh 1st Language 10. Welsh 2nd Language 29

- These figures demonstrate an increase in learners engaged in Welsh language A Levels
- Central South Consortium is delivering training to upskill teachers in Welsh language skills to improve learning.
- There is a sabbatical scheme on offer which is funded by Welsh Government.

Progress on **increasing capacity within the Welsh medium sector implemented through school 21st Century Schools and Education programme** includes:

- The authority is currently undertaking a strategic review of education. There are four work streams within the review; the school modernisation (Band B) work stream has a project which is focusing on Welsh-medium provision, considering the immediate, short and long term needs of the sector.
- A feasibility study of Welsh-medium provision across the county is currently underway and, when published, it will recommend potential options regarding how best to increase and retain the numbers of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh up to 2030. It will take into consideration the results of the learner demand survey, locations of primary schools, their proximity to the Welsh-medium secondary school and the organisation of schools – including current collaborative arrangements – and it will also factor in the reasons for the lack of continuity in Welsh-medium education as identified by the Growth and Retention Strategy.
- Cabinet have approved the recommendations to take forward to Band B options appraisals for feasibility and more detailed designs (3 October 2017). The schemes included with Bridgend's 21st Century Schools and Education Strategic Outline Programme submitted to Welsh Government make a commitment to increasing existing provision

Progress on **supporting Flying Start settings** include:

- Within Bridgend there are 18 Flying Start childcare providers, seven of which are Cylch Meithrin offering Welsh language provision
- Mudiad Meithrin data related to the transition from these settings to Welsh-medium primary schools is analysed to ensure effective transition as a means of maintaining linguistic continuity.
- The LA childcare team work to investigate the reasons for some parents not continuing with Welsh-medium education and to improve the transfer rates where they are not already 100%.
- Welsh-medium head teachers have developed a leaflet in consultation with Mudiad Meithrin and RhAG.
- At the 18 month visit all Flying Start children's parents are given information regarding the opportunity to receive provision at two years via the medium of Welsh if they so wish.
- Within Flying Start areas, parents are regularly made aware from the earliest opportunity of the benefits that are available to them from the Flying Start programme, including the opportunity for their child to benefit from Welsh language childcare provision.
- All antenatal parents in the borough benefit from information regarding Welsh language benefits for their child with Cymraeg I blant sponsoring information at both the scan and the child health record books that all children receive.

4.3.3 **Objective three:** to explore (and implement where possible) any new activities which will support the use of the Welsh language more widely within the county borough, promoting these accordingly.

In addition to the changes in section 4.1 we have had further discussions with Menter Bro Ogwr (MBO) on partnership opportunities and as result:

- the council has attended two Fforwm Iaith meetings in June and September presenting an update on strategy work during the 16/17. The council is now a regular attendee to this meeting.

- agreed to sponsor MBO's Ras y Iaith (race for the language) event in July 2018.
- gained a better understanding of other council departments that MBO is working with such as the inclusion service and supporting playscheme activities.
- during the next period we will look at ways to centrally gather data on partnership activities so they can be reported on as part of this strategy.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

There are no proposed changes to the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

This is an information report. As such, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

7. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

- 8.1 This is an update report, therefore a Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) assessment has not taken place in order to prepare this report.

9. Recommendation

That the Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this report.

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Date: 19 November 2018

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