

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

4 JULY 2019

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**UPDATE REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE (WALES)
MEASURE 2011 AND WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report updates the Cabinet Equalities Committee (CEC) on the implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and subsequent Welsh Language Standards 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 'Our Promise', 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 Since the council received its compliance notice in 2015, progress towards implementing the 171 assigned standards has continued.
- 3.2 Updates on compliance have been provided at every CEC since 28 April 2016. Those reports are referenced as background documents to this report.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 Key progress/updates with compliance since March 2019 CEC can be summarised as:
1. Since having our final determination in August last year, work is continuing in order to meet any relevant standards and update documentation accordingly. An action plan has been progressed to factor in any outstanding work as well as to address any issues that arose from attending the Welsh Language Commissioner's best

practice workshops at the end of last year, including work to develop our five year strategy as well as improve our processes in line with the policy-making standards. The action plan is included with this report as Appendix one.

2. The Welsh Language strategy board has been re-established. The new action plan has been presented to the Board. We will meet quarterly to develop practice and monitor compliance.
3. No further update on the draft code of practice to report at this time.
4. No formal complaints have been received since the March 2019 committee meeting.
5. Previous complaints update:
 - The investigation into an email response being provided in Welsh but with English only attachments as well as issues related to paying council tax online and being diverted to the English version of the system as opposed to the Welsh version has been concluded. We were issued with a compliance notice on the 8th May 2019 which gives us 90 days to ensure that 1. Bridgend County Borough Council must take action to ensure that the public can make payments via its website in Welsh. The Council must ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language when processing payments. 2. Bridgend County Borough Council must provide sufficient written evidence to satisfy the Welsh Language Commissioner that enforcement action 1 has been completed.
 - A complaint was received on 8 February 2018 by the commissioner regarding a consultation presentation to parents that was held at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd as part of the Post-16 review. The allegation is that the session was available in English only and the investigation is ongoing.
 - The complaint was received on 12 February 2019 from the commissioner in relation to an alleged failure to provide a Welsh language version of the current subsidised bus consultation document at Pencoed Library. Initial information was provided and no further action has been taken.
 - The complaint received on 12 February 2019 by the commissioner in relation to an English only maintenance/works sign being placed on West Drive, Porthcawl (Windsor Road junction) is ongoing. We have confirmed to the commissioner that the signage was immediately removed. Initial information was provided and no further action has been taken.
 - We have now received a compliance notice in relation to the investigation into the complaint made in May 2018 (covered at the July 2018 committee meeting) in relation to a failure to respond to a Welsh language email. The compliance notice gives us specific actions in relation to Standard 1, to be completed by September 2019. These actions include producing guidance and raising awareness of standard 1.

4.2 The objectives of the Welsh Language action plan (Appendix one) are:

- To address general compliance, monitoring and communication around/of the standards;
- To put in place/update the relevant policies, documentation and communications as a result of final determination;

- To address areas of development, namely the five year strategy and policy-making standards;
- To plan any actions required as a result of the code of practice.

The action plan will be reviewed quarterly by the Welsh Language strategy board.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

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

7. Financial Implications

7.1 A recurring budget of £313,000 and a one-off budget of £81,000 were established in the 2016-17 budget through the Medium Term Financial Strategy to implement those Welsh Language Standards that were agreed to be funded corporately. To date little of this funding has been allocated out, as the full financial implications of meeting all standards is not known. The one-off budget has been retained until a clearer picture emerges. The cost of implementing the Welsh Language Standards will continue to be reviewed during 2019-20 and, if the costs are deemed to be significantly higher than budgeted, a decision will be made corporately as to how this shortfall will be met. The current available budget in 2019-20 is £324,649.

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

9.1 That the Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this report.

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Date: 04 July 2019

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11. Background papers:

- 28 April 2016 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards ;
- 14 July 2016 Welsh Language standards annual report 2015/16 ;
- 14 July 2016 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards ;
- 10 November 2016 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards ;
- 9 March 2017 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards ;
- 13 July 2017 Welsh Language standards annual report 2016/17 ;
- 13 July 2017 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards ;
- 23 November 2017 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards.
- 22 March 2018 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards.
- 16 July 2018 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards.
- 19 November 2018 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards.
- 26 March 2019 Update report on implementation of the Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Welsh Language standards.