



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4TH JUNE 2014

SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with information on the Caerphilly Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2014-17 and seek approval to publish by 1st June 2014.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The WESP was developed regionally with lead support from the Education Achievement Service, to enable a collaborative strategic approach, whilst allowing for local authority development and accountability. There is a strong local emphasis on outcomes 1, 2 and 6 with outcomes 3, 4, 5 and 7 being more regionally directed.
- 2.2 The WESP fulfils the local authority's duty to monitor and improve standards of Welsh language, educational attainment, and it directs the appropriate use of the Welsh Education Grant funding, which is regionally administered.
- 2.3 Individual WESPs must be submitted to fulfil the legal duty of each local authority. However, regional collaboration must be identified within individual plans.
- 2.4 The WESP is updated and monitored regularly by the Caerphilly WESP Forum (Appendix 1), as well as through the South East Wales Consortium Strategic WESP Forum.(Appendix 2).
- 2.5 Statutory consultation was undertaken between 31st January and 4th April 2014 and responses were taken into account when finalising the plan.
- 2.6 The WESP contains an analysis of the current provision and captures an innovative style of delivery to improve standards. It highlights best practice and includes targets for continuing improvement and provision. The local authority remains committed to supporting parental choice through equitable support in both Welsh and English medium schools.
- 2.7 Welsh medium learning pathways for 14-19 year olds have been developed as part of the WESP. These have been agreed through Partneriaeth 6 , the stakeholder group (Appendix 3).

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 This plan will be implemented using the regional Welsh Education Grant funding.
- 3.2 The plan links to the Council's current Welsh Language Scheme annual reporting requirements.

- 3.3 This plan fulfils the Council's duty under the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Government of Wales Act 2006 (Section 78), National Welsh Medium Education Strategy 2010.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The five authorities of Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen have developed a Regional WESP with local area specific aspects to each outcome. The vision is:

South East Wales will lead the development of Welsh standards in education to equip a bilingual Wales with a skilled bilingual workforce, supporting the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh in Education. We will work together as a region to equip schools and education providers across age ranges and linguistic sectors with the capacity and sustainability to increase standards in Welsh and promote the use of the Welsh language within families, communities and workplaces. We will aim to stimulate and provide local, accessible, sustainable, community-focused provision to meet the growing demand for Welsh-medium education.

By 2017, Caerphilly will:

- Continue to proactively offer early years provision to stimulate parental demand, and then continue to meet parental demand for Welsh Medium education.
 - Conduct annual parental demand surveys in the autumn term. Subsequently, demand will be assessed and an action plan produced and reviewed annually..
 - Reduce the number of Welsh-medium primary schools with over 10% surplus places from 5 out of 11 to 3 out of 11 schools by meeting parental demand stimulated in the Early Years.
 - Develop Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni'r Y Gwyndy site to include sixth form provision and relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili to the site.
- 4.2 All local authorities are committed to ensuring that all children who attend an English-medium school have the opportunity to learn Welsh, in accordance with the national curriculum and are able to achieve an accredited Welsh language qualification by the age of 16.
- 4.3 Within the action plan there are targets to continuously improve standards, under the 7 outcomes as identified in the Welsh Government guidance:
- 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 school to secondary school
- Outcome 3: More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 4: More learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh in schools, colleges and work-based learning
- Outcome 5: More learners with higher skills in Welsh
- Outcome 6: Welsh-medium provision for learners Additional Learning Needs
- Outcome 7: Workforce planning and Continuous Professional Development
- 4.4 Areas covered within the WESP include:
- Antenatal information to families
 - Flying Start programme
 - Early Years Education
 - Support for Early Years childcare settings and out of school clubs
 - Improving Standards of Welsh in Primary Schools
 - Improving Standards of Welsh in Secondary Schools
 - Links to Colleges and further education
 - Support for children with additional needs within Welsh medium Education

- Literacy improvement schemes
- Workforce development
- Updated data sets to establish current performance
- Learning and best practice developed from successful pilots

4.5 Members of both the Caerphilly forum and the regional forum will monitor the action plan and review progress on a termly basis.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council's Equalities and Welsh Language Team, together with the Menter Iaith and Mudiad Meithrin (voluntary sector Welsh Language organisations) are members of the task and finish group who monitor the plan, and they have also contributed towards its production.

5.2 The Council's team also work with the Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning to ensure greater coordination under the corporate Equalities and Welsh Language requirements across the county borough for monitoring and recording of workforce development, staff linguistic abilities and offering training opportunities.

5.3 The positive equality implications linked to provision will be addressed through sufficiency of places, access to resources, and sharing best practice to deliver the vision as outlined in 4.1. All projects developed from the WESP will be also be assessed for Equalities and Welsh Language considerations.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This plan will be implemented through the Regional Welsh Education Grant funding, which is operated through the Education Achievement Service. In addition, there is a Local Authority Flying Start contract to support Early Years childcare settings delivered through Menter Iaith to the value of £36,500.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications within this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All comments have been reflected in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report prior to publication on the Caerphilly CBC website by 1st June 2014.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

10.1 Members are apprised of the amendments made which will allow the Council to achieve its duties under the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government's national Welsh Medium Education Strategy.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

11.2 Government of Wales Act 2006 (Section 78), National Welsh Medium Education Strategy 2010.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Membership of the Caerphilly WESP Forum

Appendix 2: South East Wales Consortium Strategic WESP Forum

Appendix 3: Membership of Partneriaeth 6

Background papers:

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-17