



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM

SUBJECT: WELSH EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This information report for members will explain the progress of the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) during 2020.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 There has been good progress in WESP 2017-2020 which has been extended for a year due to Covid. The new five-year WESP is being developed in 2021 but will not take effect until September 2022.
- 2.2 During 2020 there has been good progress in progressing the Welsh medium capital projects. There has been a slight percentage decrease in requests for Welsh medium childcare but an overall increase in access to Welsh medium Primary school places. There has continued to be excellent transition rate between Primary and Secondary schools and the transition rates for many Cylch Meithrin to Welsh medium Primary school has improved. However, three Cylch Meithrin have low rates of transition (below 60%)
- 2.3 During 2020 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymini ran a successful hub provision for critical workers and vulnerable learners. The Welsh medium cluster has developed a remote learning offer as well as increased the percentage of learners aged 14-19years studying qualifications through the medium of Welsh. The cluster ALNCo have also worked collaboratively to ensure they are able to offer suitable provision for all Welsh medium learners.
- 2.4 The annual plan makes 5 priority actions for 2021 as listed below.
- Priority 1: move forward in the capital development programme to expand Welsh medium Education provision

- Priority 2: further explore reasons for the three lowest transition rates between the Cylchoedd Meithrin and Welsh medium school nurseries to establish the impact of coronavirus
- Priority 3: develop and implement the new curriculum for Welsh Language
- Priority 4: implementation of the ALN Act for Welsh medium learners
- Priority 5: develop the new Welsh Education Strategic Plan and appropriate datasets in readiness for implementation by September 2022

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members receive the report for information and note the progress made in 2020.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Compliance with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The WESP has made progress during 2020 although progress has been slowed or changed in many areas in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. The new five-year WESP has been delayed for a year and so will be developed in 2021 to take effect from September 2022.

- 5.2 **Outcome 1: More seven-year-old children taught through the medium of Welsh**
During 2020 there was a slight percentage decrease in children requesting Welsh medium Flying Start and Childcare Offer places. However, there was an overall slight increase in percentage of children in Welsh medium Primary school during 2020.

Following delay in one scheme, the planned Welsh medium capital schemes are progressing well.

During the Summer term of 2020 many Cylchoedd and Menter Iaith Caerffili provisions were closed which had an impact on access to Welsh medium childcare. However, many settings re-opened September 2020 with only the Clwb Carco and Clwb Gwyliau remaining closed currently.

- 5.3 **Outcome 2: More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from Primary to Secondary School**

The PLASC dataset shows a 99.8% transition rate between Primary and Secondary School which is excellent.

Of the 14 Cylchoedd Meithrin, 1 has closed, 1 has become bilingual and no longer a Mudiad Meithrin member and 1 is wraparound only and so works alongside the part time school nursery. Most of the remaining Cylchoedd Meithrin have transition rates above 65%, with only 3 below this percentage of whom 2 are around 25% of children transitioning to Welsh medium nursery. This remains a focus for Mudiad Meithrin officer and early years team in the local authority, although further exploration may be needed to establish the cause of this low transition rate. Many Cylchoedd closed between April and July 2020 and so the transition numbers may have been adversely

affected. However, there is a need to establish the cause and not make assumptions that this low transition rate was attributable solely to the impact of coronavirus during the summer term.

There are 21 Welsh medium or bilingual childcare settings (including 17 settings run by Menter Iaith Caerffili) who are not Mudiad Meithrin members and as such their data is not included in the transition data specified although they contribute significantly to improving Welsh language of children and young people.

5.4 **Outcome 3: More 14-16year olds studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh**

There was an increase in learners studying qualifications through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20 based on PLASC data although the number in Coleg y Cymoedd studying Welsh medium customer care units decreased due to the impact of covid. Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni adapted their delivery to support online learning during the response to covid and reduced numbers on school site, using a variety of methods and uploading to the Google classroom platform.

5.5 **Outcome 4: More 16-19year olds studying qualifications through the medium of Welsh in schools, colleges and work-based learning**

There was an increase in learners studying qualifications through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20 on the PLASC return.

However, there was a slight decrease in Coleg y Cymoedd due to the impact of Covid.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru have continued to work with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Menter Iaith and Caerphilly CBC Youth Service to support young people with additional Welsh language activities throughout the response to covid.

5.6 **Outcome 5: More learners with higher skills in Welsh**

During the period of March to June 2020 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni ran a hub for children and young people of critical workers and vulnerable learners. This enabled a wider number of children to access Welsh language activity and support. While running the hub, the school staff continued to offer remote learning opportunities to their learners to continue to develop their Welsh language skills and learning. Coleg y Cymoedd also moved to online learning across all four campus. This also enabled more students to join Welsh language activities from across all four campus and had significant benefits to supporting their Welsh language skills.

The Education Achievement Service (EAS) have developed promotional material for parents to support their children's learning and links to various support organisations and resources. All Welsh medium primary schools in the EAS region, have achieved silver in the Welsh Language Charter and in the last year have been supported by Ysgol Penalltau and their Criw Cymraeg on twitter.

5.7 **Outcome 6: Welsh medium provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

There was an increase of percentage children identified with ALN during 2019/20. Schools have all completed the ALN readiness tool and ALNCOs are working collaboratively to ensure the schools are able to offer suitable provision for all Welsh medium learners. The Specialist Resource Base in Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Derwen and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni Gelli Haf site are working to support the cluster to identify those children and young people whose needs are best met in their main school and those who need more specialist provision.

5.8 **Outcome 7: Workforce planning and continuous professional development**
Most organisations supporting workforce development have moved to online learning during 2020 and the response to covid enabling reach to a wider range of learners.

5.9 **Conclusion**

The annual report has highlighted priority actions during 2021 which are listed below.

Priority 1: move forward in the capital development programme to expand Welsh medium Education provision

Priority 2: further explore reasons for the three lowest transition rates between the Cylchoedd Meithrin and Welsh medium school nurseries

Priority 3: develop and implement the new curriculum for Welsh Language

Priority 4: implementation of the ALN Act for Welsh medium learners

Priority 5: develop the new Welsh Education Strategic Plan and appropriate datasets in readiness for implementation by September 2022

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no specific assumptions.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

7.2 Future Generations Wellbeing Act
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
CCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022
Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 Strategy
CCBC Corporate Wellbeing Plan
Education Shared Ambitions Strategy
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
21st Century schools programme Band B
Welsh medium capital programme
Childcare capital programme
ALN Act and ALN transformation regional plan

8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 The report contributes to the Well-being Goals:-

- A prosperous Wales – appropriately skilled children, young people and adults for a bilingual workforce
- A healthier Wales – appropriate learning environments to support the wellbeing of

- all learners
- A more equal Wales – appropriate provision for all learners including those most able or more vulnerable
- A Wales of Thriving Culture and Thriving Welsh Language – commitment to supporting the Welsh culture as well as increasing the places available in Welsh medium provision to support the Welsh Government's commitment to 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050

8.2 The report demonstrates action taken in regard to the sustainable development principles:

- Long Term – The development of the WESP will aim to balance short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability of future generations to meet their long-term needs in a bilingual country
- Prevention – The WESP considers all provision required including supporting the wellbeing of all our learners as well as specific provision for our most vulnerable learners
- Integration – The WESP has outcomes aligned with various other policies and strategic plans.
- Collaboration – The Welsh Education Forum enables all members from a diverse range of organisations to bring their skills and expertise to develop a holistic WESP to support children, young people and families in our communities
- Involvement – The WEF has membership from the Parent Network, Menter Iaith and RhAG to ensure that children, young people and families' views are incorporated throughout the development of the WESP. The WESP will also have full consultation during 2019 to ensure wide representations of views are incorporated.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Currently there is not an updated Integrated Impact Assessment which will be completed with the new proposed Welsh Education Strategic Plan due for development in 2021 and implementation from September 2022. The WESP stimulates demand for Welsh medium provision and Welsh language Education to enable positive engagement across all communities with the Welsh language. There are substantive positive impacts for the WESP including promoting and supporting development of the Welsh language across communities through Welsh medium schools and Further Education as well wider community support for parents to develop their Welsh language skills. There are substantive links to the equalities, 21st Century Schools and CCBC Welsh Language strategies as well as the Welsh Government's strategy for 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no financial implications of this report as any resources required have been incorporated into existing resources and plans.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no personnel implications of this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 All views in the consultation are contained within this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 WESP Annual review report December 2020