



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 19TH FEBRUARY 2019

**SUBJECT: WELSH EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN – PERFORMANCE UPDATE
2018**

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report presents an annual update on the work completed under the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in 2018.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The WESP was developed locally but with a collaborative strategic approach through the Caerphilly Welsh Education Forum (WEF), allowing for local authority development and accountability. The forum monitors the implementation of actions required for strategic delivery and expansion of Welsh medium provision in line with the Welsh Government's commitment to 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

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 The WESP contains an analysis of the current provision, 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.

2.4 There are many developments to report on within 2018 contained within the main body of this report including successful capital bids to further develop Welsh medium provision over the next 3-7 years. The full WESP update report is attached in appendix 1 and 2.

2.5 The Welsh Education Forum (WEF) has membership from Cabinet Member for Education, Local Authority departments, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Rhag, Menter Iaith, Mudiad Meithrin, Parent Network, Coleg y Cymoedd, Urdd, and the WESP is also supported by the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Caerphilly WESP contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:

- *A prosperous Wales* – The WESP aims to support children and young people to develop their Welsh language skills and improve standards of achievement, which will create a bilingual population able to support and grow our economy.
- *A resilient Wales* – Although schools will build eco schools into their curriculum, this is not specifically mentioned in the WESP which is the strategic overview.
- *A healthier Wales* – The Healthy Early Years scheme and the Healthy Schools scheme are both embedded into practice across Flying Start, childcare settings, Primary and Secondary schools.
- *A more equal Wales* – The WESP has an objective to reduce the impact of poverty on children and young people through various closing the gap initiatives throughout the age ranges from Flying Start Welsh medium provision to Cylchoedd Meithrin to Primary school and Secondary school attainment. Outcome 6 focuses on the needs of learners with Additional Needs and how we will meet those needs in Welsh medium provision.
- *A Wales of cohesive communities* – Outcome 5 aims to support the use of Welsh and increase the standards in Welsh language delivering social activities and meeting spaces in communities.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Improving use of Welsh language and supporting the development of a bilingual workforce in the future is a key aim of the WESP. Arts and recreation activities also feature in Outcome 5 through the work of Urdd Gobaith Cymru and Menter Iaith. This is further embedded through actions in Caerphilly County Borough's Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 with particular reference to Strategic Area 1 – The Family, Strategic Area 2 – Children and Young People, Strategic Area 3 – Communities and Strategic Area 6 – Infrastructure (Policies and Practices).
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Although not specifically mentioned in the WESP, wellbeing is embedded through practice across Flying Start, childcare settings, Primary and Secondary schools.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The WESP 2017-20 is aspirational and clearly depends on Welsh Government funding to deliver the First Minister's programme for Government 2016-2021 Taking Wales Forward, working towards one million people speaking the Welsh language by 2050. Funding will enable delivery towards the aspirations for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act for a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and the The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 from which we must now comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards. One of the key standards was a requirement to develop a 5 year Welsh language strategy, with the aim of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and which will enable us to facilitate the use of the Welsh Language within the Caerphilly county borough.
- 4.2 Our aim is to secure equality of access by promoting and supporting the development of inclusive education and giving a commitment to providing the best possible quality of education and services within available resources.
- 4.3 We work strategically together as a region with South East Wales Education Achievement Service 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.
- 4.4 We aim to stimulate and provide local, accessible, sustainable, community-focused provision to meet the growing demand for Welsh medium education.
- 4.5 Highlights for 2018:
- 4.6 All capital projects have been planned strategically to ensure plans are linked across plans, funding bids and enable maximising of resources available.

- We have been successful in securing Welsh Government approval of the Band B 21st Century Schools proposals which include 2 Welsh medium schools, which are now subject to member approval of the funding mechanism proposed.
 - We have been successful in securing more than £6million for developing Welsh medium provision on school sites (which were not included in the Band B proposals) securing the expansion of places required in both school and childcare provision.
 - We are awaiting the outcome of the Childcare Capital submission (due January 2019) which includes Welsh medium childcare development.
- 4.7 The multi agency partnership in both the WEF and the Welsh Language Forum have developed a leaflet to promote the benefits of becoming bilingual, which we aim to have online as well as around the borough in a range of public places (see appendix 3).
- 4.8 The Clwb Cwtsh which is an 8 week programme aimed to support parents to focus on speaking Welsh with their children has successfully been delivered in 2018.
- 4.9 Croes I'r Bont is a scheme delivered by Mudiad Meithrin to support Welsh language acquisition skills in Cylch Meithrin and has successfully run in one Cylch in Caerphilly improving staff and children's use of language. Gwyl Feithrin facilitated by Mudiad Meithrin was well attended by all Cylchoedd across the borough.
- 4.10 Cylch Meithrin Rhymni has developed a satellite provision 'Mwy Rhymni' to deliver wraparound in Ysgol Y Lawnt.
- 4.11 Cymraeg I'r Blant has delivered session in various parent / baby groups across Caerphilly to promote the benefits of bilingualism.
- 4.12 The Parent Network has worked with two groups of children / parents to develop bilingual children's books: Partners in Time was written by children in Ysgol Gynradd Penalltau funded through the Gelligaer Community Council; Fistful of Feathers was written by parents and children of Graig Y Rhacca Primary to address the issue of loan sharks.
- 4.13 The Urdd continues to deliver a range of language enrichment activities across the borough at both secondary and primary school age ranges, including trips both in Wales and abroad. The Urdd has also developed a Welsh Youth Forum with 2 representatives sitting at the national forum.
- 4.14 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni (YGCRh) continues to work collaboratively with Coleg y Cymoedd as well as Ysgol Gyfun Gwynlliw and Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed to deliver a broad Welsh medium curriculum for 14-18 year olds. YGCRh is collaborating with the EAS in order that its in-house, on-line, personalised language course will be available across the region.
- 4.15 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni are collaborating within the Hexad of schools (Cwm Rhymni, Gwent Is Coed, Gwynllyw, Risca, John Frost and Lliswerry) in establishing collaborative Welsh language Professional Development in line with the Successful Futures Strategy for developing Welsh medium hub schools.
- 4.16 Coleg Y Cymoedd have extended their Iath Ar Waith (IAW) provision and now includes learners from Construction and Engineering, Childcare, Health and Social Care, Catering, Business, Travel and Tourism, and the Creative Industries. 364 learners successfully completed the IAW unit to level 2 in 2017-18.
- 4.17 Menter Iaith continue to deliver Welsh medium childcare provision which includes 2 Clwb Brecwast, 3 Clwb Gwyliau, 3 Clwb Meithrin, and 7 Clwb Carco. Menter Iaith also deliver the Road to Bilingualism scheme which supports 25 English medium childcare provision per year to improve the Welsh used within the setting.

- 4.18 Menter Iaith supports 11 Welsh medium Primary schools in the delivery of Y Siarter Iath, especially through the video clubs and have linked children and young people across the borough through an online platform.
- 4.19 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni is proactively working with its feeder primary schools to ensure processes for supporting children and young people with additional needs have a good transition. The ALN department in collaboration with the South East Wales Welsh medium Partnership led the South Wales Welsh medium secondary training day (23/11/18) for Classroom Assistants with over 50 Classroom Assistants for 10 schools attending the conference.
- 4.20 There is a regional ALN Early Years leads group to develop resources, training packages and support for childcare settings across the region which will include all of our Cylchoedd to ensure children with ALN are supported with suitably skilled childcare staff teams who implement strategies to support access childcare provision, as well as enable early identification of additional needs.
- 4.21 There is a significant amount of workforce development developed and delivered through Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Caerphilly CBC, Early Years, and the Education Achievement Service.
- 4.22 The Parent Survey was completed in Autumn 2018 and the results will be analysed and added to the report in Spring 2019.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. The WESP aims over the long term to raise standards and increase the number of Welsh speakers through increasing the numbers accessing Welsh medium education, thereby developing the bilingual workforce as well as contributing to the Welsh Government 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 pledge.
- 5.2 It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that school places are planned in the long term and capital bids submitted to increase provision in line with parental demand increases.
- 5.3 A focus on closing the gap in communities and improving educational attainment standards aims to prevent the cycle of poverty being repeated.
- 5.4 The WESP has a regional approach where integration of provision where reasonable and feasible is endorsed. Integrating Flying Start provision or Cylchoedd Meithrin with their local Primary School and clustering Primary school provision with the Secondary school as well as linking with the voluntary sector through Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith and Urdd Gobaith Cymru, aids integration of provision and maximises resources available.
- 5.5 The WESP encourages a collaborative approach across services as well as regional collaboration through task groups which include development of a regional Welsh Language ALN Professional Forum to enable improved support to our most vulnerable learners.
- 5.6 Involvement is intrinsic to the WESP development and delivery as the stakeholders are diverse and seek opinions across the borough from families, children, young people, professionals, both public bodies and voluntary sector. Stakeholders inform the content of the WESP and bring a range of views across the sector which is monitored for delivery through the local WESP forum.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The WESP has positive equality implications linked to provision of sufficient places, access to resources and sharing of best practice to deliver the vision outlined in 4.1. The focus is on the development of Welsh language and improving standards across Welsh provision both in Welsh medium and where it is delivered as Welsh second language. Outcome 1 and 2 focuses on supporting and encouraging development of the Welsh language in early years and improving positive transition to Foundation Phase and throughout transition periods to KS4. Outcome 3, 4, and 5 focuses on improving standards in KS4 and KS5 as well as access to social contextual use of Welsh language to improve their language skills. Outcome 6 specifically focusses on support for children with Additional Needs including provision for specialist provision and a range of interventions. Outcome 7 focuses on the need for training and development of the workforce to ensure good quality language acquisition skills.
- 6.2 The Council's Equalities and Welsh Language Team, together with Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith and Urdd Gobaith Cymru (voluntary sector Welsh Language organisations) are members of the Caerphilly WESP forum and have contributed to its production. Caerphilly's 5 year Welsh Language Strategy is inextricably linked to the WESP as a key delivery method, and is referenced throughout the WESP to the relevant action.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This plan will be implemented through the Regional Welsh Education Grant, Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) and Early Years PDG, Flying Start grant as well as additional funding to support across the sector Early Years childcare settings to improve Welsh language provision delivered currently through Menter Iaith £25,000.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendation is to note the contents of the report and the implementation to date.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To note the strategic direction and amended targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013
Government of Wales Act 2006 (Section 78)
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
Welsh-medium Education Strategy 2016

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Welsh Education Strategic Plan updated 2018 (Cymraeg)
Appendix 2 – Welsh Education Strategic Plan updated 2018 (English)
Appendix 3 – Benefits of being Bilingual booklet