



CABINET – 15TH JUNE 2022

SUBJECT: WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members and seek their endorsement of the progress made during the financial year 2021-2022 against four specific areas of Welsh language work, as required under the regulatory framework for implementing the Welsh Language Standards.
- 1.2 The report will be published online by the deadline date of 30 June 2022, as required by Welsh Language Standard 158.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce an annual monitoring report on implementing Welsh language issues under current legislation and in compliance with Standard 158.
- 2.2 The information required for 2021-2022 covers four required key areas.

Detail of Reporting Requirement	Standard No. (and sub-clause)
Complaints from the Public The annual report must include the number of complaints that you received during that year which related to your compliance with the standards with which you were under a duty to comply.	147, 148, 149, 156, 158(2), 162, 164(2), 168(a), 170(2)(d)
Staff Language Skills The number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question (on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 151);	170(2)(a) 151

Detail of Reporting Requirement	Standard No. (and sub-clause)
<p>Welsh Medium Training Provision</p> <p>The number of members of staff who attended training courses you offered in Welsh during the year (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152);</p> <p>If a Welsh version of a course was offered by you during that year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version (on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 152).</p>	<p>170(2)(b) 170(2)(c) 152</p>
<p>Recruiting to Empty Posts</p> <p>The number of new and vacant posts that you advertised during the year which were categorised as posts where:</p> <p>(i) Welsh language skills were essential (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable, (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary</p> <p>(on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154);</p>	<p>170(2)(ch), 154</p>

- 2.3 The report provides an update to Members on the Council's current position in relation to the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 statutory requirements.
- 2.4 The report outlines the good progress made by service areas in embedding arrangements for delivering services through the medium of Welsh and increasing the Welsh language skills capacity of the workforce.
- 2.5 It is evident from the content of the report that the work done to date is moving in the right direction. The good progress and momentum will be maintained by continuing to work with partners and responding to help, advice and best practice from the Welsh Language Commissioner and other regional and national bodies.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet Members note the content of the annual report and endorse the publication of this information as a record of progress towards, and compliance with, the relevant Welsh Language Standards.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As per Standard 158 of the Council's Compliance Notice, the Council must;
- Produce an annual report which deals with the way in which it has complied with the service delivery standards with which it is under a duty to comply during that year.
 - Include in the annual report the number of complaints received during that year which relate to its compliance with the service delivery standards with which it is under a duty to comply.

- Publish the annual report on its website by 30 June each year.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The annual report highlights the following performance information;

- We received 1 Welsh language complaint during this financial year. The complaint raised a number of issues including;
 - Electoral Service letter with English information in the Welsh version,
 - the complaint could not be dealt with in Welsh by telephone,
 - the Complaints webpage only provides an email address as contact details
 - the Chatbot does not work properly on the website.

All points were addressed in our response:

- Electoral Services acknowledged the error and made the necessary amendments to the letter template
 - Electoral Services have appointed a Welsh speaking member of staff
 - The contact details on the Complaints webpage have been updated
 - It was explained to the complainant that the Chatbot was introduced during the Covid-19 lockdown to signpost members of the public to the relevant Covid-19 information. The Chatbot will be 'trained' to deal with other Council services moving forward, including Complaints.
- The Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 was reviewed and a full report can be seen in Appendix 1 of the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021-2022.
 - The Council developed a replacement Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027. The strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2022, and has been published on the Council's website. The strategy will be officially launched at Ffiliffest – Caerphilly's annual Welsh Language Festival on 11 June 2022.
 - There was another slight increase in the number of Welsh speaking staff recorded on our HR system for 2021-2022 across all 3 directorates.
 - We undertook a number of different promotion activities, including the launch of the Make One Small Change Campaign, Diwrnod Shwmae and Welsh Language Rights Day. We also worked alongside Careers Wales to develop videos promoting careers within Caerphilly Council and helping to raise students' awareness of the importance of having Welsh language skills to use in different workplaces.
 - Sadly we saw a significant dip in the number of staff learning Welsh with only 35 registered. This is the lowest figure we've ever recorded since we started collecting this data back in 2001.

There is some work that needs to be done here, especially at a time when having staff with Welsh language skills is so important to deliver bilingual services, and the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office closely monitoring our progress.

- Out of 850 new and vacant posts advertised only 10 of these were advertised as Welsh Essential. 24 posts were advertised where Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed; 810 posts advertised as Welsh Desirable; and 6 where no Welsh language skills were required. These 6 posts were advertised as so due in part to existing staff already possessing Welsh language skills within teams or service areas.

All posts are advertised with a default of Welsh desirable as a minimum.

5.2 Conclusion

It is evident from the content of the report that there has been some progress during 2021-2022. Over the next 12 months we will be ensuring services are being delivered in line with the Welsh Language Standards. We will also work with service areas to identify and address any Welsh language training or Welsh language skills requirements to deliver services.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Full Equalities and Welsh language assessments and consultation were undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan and the Five Year Welsh Language Strategy when they were being developed; therefore no full assessment has been made on this annual report.

The report is an assessment of progress made by the Council under the Welsh Language Standards and in line with associated actions in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and the Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027.

7.2 Welsh language is a crosscutting theme of the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and impacts on every Council policy, function and procedure, covering those aimed at the public and internal policies covering the Council's staff members. The report contributes to the following Well-being Goals:

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

7.3 The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, which includes Welsh language and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards as a strategic equality objective in its own right, has direct links with a number of other current policies and strategies, both within the Council and in terms of partnership working.

7.4 There are also Welsh Government strategies or regulations that the Council's Welsh Language work links to, including "**Mwy Na Geiriau / More Than Words**" (the National Health and Social Care Welsh Language Strategy), "**Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers**" (Welsh Government's Welsh language strategy) and **Prosperity for All**.

7.5 This report ties in with the following objectives of the Corporate Plan 2018-2023;

- Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all
- Objective 2 - Enabling employment
- Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

7.6 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out above. It is also consistent with the five ways of working:

- Long Term – Ensuring that staff have the skills to deliver bilingual services now and in the future
- Prevention – Improving services and upskilling staff will ensure that everyone regardless of language choice has equal access to services and thus preventing

- complaints and Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations.
- Integration – By providing bilingual services to the public we make everyone feel equal and valued.
 - Collaboration – Partnership working is key to this and assists the council in meeting its duties under the Welsh Language Standards. Working in collaboration with partners is further evidenced in the Five Year Welsh Language Strategy.
 - Involvement – As noted under collaboration, we must involve our partners to deliver on the Five Year Welsh Language Strategy and to assist us with service delivery.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report as the annual report covers work already undertaken in the previous financial year. However it should be noted that moving the agenda forward will incur financial implications, particularly in relation to Welsh language translation and training of staff.

The cost of supporting staff to attend Welsh in the Workplace courses for 2021-2022, which assists in the delivery of bilingual Council services under the Standards, was £2209.00.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications to this report, although this continues to be reviewed as the work of implementing the Welsh Language Standards progresses. This is relevant to Section 7 of Appendix A, which focuses on Recruiting to Empty Posts.
- 9.2 No posts will be advertised without a Welsh Language Skills Assessment.

10. CONSULTATIONS

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

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 11.2 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

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Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager

Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Papers:

- Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
- Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027
- Various Guidance Documents (*These are available electronically for information on the Policy Portal and on relevant website pages at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities*)

Appendices:

Appendix A Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2021-2022