

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2023-2024

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh
Language Commissioner



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

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This report is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.

Introduction

This annual monitoring report for 2023-2024 covers the four areas required under the regulatory framework and demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to providing bilingual services to the public and staff members.

Detail of Reporting Requirement	Related Standard Number (& sub-clause)
<p>Complaints from the Public</p> <p>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.</p>	147, 148, 149, 156, 158 (2), 162, 164 (2), 168 (a), 170 (2) (d)
<p>Staff Language Skills</p> <p>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).</p>	170 (2) (a) 151
<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>	170 (2) (b) 170 (2) (c) 152
<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>Welsh language skills were essential Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post Welsh language skills were desirable, Welsh language skills were not necessary</p> <p>(on the basis of the records you kept in accordance with standard 154)</p>	170 (2) (ch) 154

On 8 October 2020, the Council adopted a new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024. Six of the seven Strategic Equality Objectives, as listed below, include Welsh language implications:

Equality Objective 1	Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services
Equality Objective 2	Education, Skills and Employment – Improve education opportunities for all
Equality Objective 3	Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities
Equality Objective 4	Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery
Equality Objective 5	Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements
Equality Objective 6	Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough

The Council's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team have been actively involved in discussions and debates around the implementation of the Welsh language Standards since January 2014. A number of reports and presentations have been presented in order to keep them fully informed of ongoing improvements in the provision of services through the Welsh language.

1. Welsh Language Standards: Action Plan

Since the Welsh Language Standards were introduced on 30 March 2016, we have developed a Compliance Work Programme to ensure that services we deliver are in accordance with the Standards, that staff are aware of their obligations and that they have the required language skills where possible.

The Compliance Work Programme is summarised below:

Correspondence - Standards 4, 5 & 7

These standards relate to correspondence, which must be bilingual if we do not know language choice or are sending letters out to a number of people regarding the same subject matter. We must ensure that our letterhead is also compliant.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – General Correspondence
- Bilingual auto-signatures on emails for all staff on email along with the following statement:

Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

Correspondence may be in any language or format. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.
- Letterhead templates in place

Telephone – Standards 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21 & 22

These standards relate to how we deal with telephone calls and that a bilingual greeting is given. Staff must be equipped with the relevant language skills to deal with calls in Welsh, and if they are unable, that they know who the Welsh speakers are that are able to deal with the matter, and how to transfer calls. If no Welsh speaker is available to provide the subject specific information the call can be put through to a non-Welsh speaker.

We must state, when we publish main telephone numbers that we welcome calls in Welsh and all our automated telephone systems must be bilingual.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – Telephone Greetings
- Training delivered to staff to ensure they can give basic greetings and provide reception services in our main locations
- Welcoming Welsh language calls has been published in **Newsline** since the June 2017 edition
- Employees provided with desk stands, which are Quick Reference Guides
- Automated telephone messages for service areas recorded bilingually
- Answer machine messages for service areas recorded bilingually
- There are now Welsh speaking staff working in the Contact Centre

Meetings - Standards 24, 24A, 27, 27A, 27D, 29 & 29A

These standards are about how we invite individuals to meetings and when we must offer them the opportunity to use the Welsh language. If they so wish, we must then arrange simultaneous translation to facilitate that meeting.

If inviting more than one individual to a meeting they must all be asked if they wish to use the Welsh language. However, if at least 10% wish to use Welsh then simultaneous translation must be arranged. If less than 10%, the Welsh speakers must be informed that on this occasion we are not required to fulfil their request to speak Welsh at the meeting.

If the meeting with the individual is regarding their well-being, and they wish to speak Welsh, then simultaneous translation must be provided so that the individual can speak in their language of choice. Well-being meetings must be conducted with simultaneous translation if any attendee has requested that they use Welsh.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – Meetings with individuals
- When inviting individuals to a meeting, services are required to include a standard sentence asking their language choice and if they wish to use or conduct the meeting through the medium of Welsh
- Using MS Teams for public meetings which now has the simultaneous translation functionality

Public Meetings and Events – Standards 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 & 36

Any advert or notice publicising public meetings/events/activities must state that Welsh can be used.

Any invitations to public meetings/events/activities must be sent in Welsh and English and all material displayed at the public meeting must be bilingual, Welsh first.

Any speakers at public meetings/events/activities must be asked if they wish to use Welsh, and if so simultaneous translation must be arranged. All attendees at public meetings /events/activities must be informed orally that they are welcome to use Welsh and that simultaneous translation is available for the non-Welsh speakers.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – Public Meetings
- FACTSHEET for staff – Event Planning
- Translation and Interpretation Framework in place since May 2017 for simultaneous translation requests. We are currently working on developing a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) allowing greater flexibility to add new providers at any time
- Using MS Teams for public meetings which now has the simultaneous translation functionality
- We actively ask people to inform us of their language preference, be it BSL, Welsh or another language, in advance of a public meeting or event, so we can arrange for simultaneous translation to be available

Agendas, minutes and other public documents – Standards 41 & 47

These Standards relate to producing the following documents in Welsh:

- Agendas and minutes for Cabinet
- Agendas and minutes for Education for Life Scrutiny and Full Council

In addition, if a document is produced for public use, and is not caught by any other Standard, it must be produced in Welsh, if the subject matter suggests it should be produced in Welsh, or if the anticipated audience and their expectations suggests that it should be produced in Welsh e.g. Reports relating to Welsh medium education or the Welsh language.

Action taken:

- Producing agendas and minutes for Cabinet, Education for Life Scrutiny and Full Council in Welsh is current practice

General Publications – Standards 42, 43, 44, 45, 46 & 47

These Standards relate the following being produced in Welsh if they are for the public or provide information to the public:

- Licences, certificates, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, cards, policies, strategies, annual reports, corporate plans, guidelines, codes of practice or any rules that apply to the public

Any statement that we issue to the press must be bilingual unless the statement is issued during an "emergency" as defined in Section 1 - Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

If a document is produced for public use, and is not caught by any other standard, it must be produced in Welsh if the subject matter suggests it should be produced in Welsh or if the anticipated audience and their expectations suggest that it should be produced in Welsh.

Action taken:

- Producing licences, certificates, brochures, leaflets, pamphlets, cards, policies, strategies, annual reports, corporate plans, guidelines, codes of practice or any rules that apply to the public, in Welsh, is already current practice
- Communications Team aware regarding the issuing of public statements

Consultation Documents – Standards 44, 91, 92 & 93

Consultation documents must be bilingual and must consider and seek views on:

1. what the effects, whether positive or negative, the proposal would have on; or
2. how the proposal could be developed or revised so that it would not have negative effects, or so that it would have decreased negative effects on:
 - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
 - (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Action taken:

- The Integrated Impact Assessment process includes a specific section on the Welsh language and consultation, and asks if considerations have been given to the Welsh language during the consultation process
- A Welsh Language in Consultation Checklist has been drafted so that all officers undertaking consultation exercises are aware of their obligations. Advice and support is available from the Engagement/Equalities and Welsh Language teams

Website, Social Media and Electronic Devices – Standards 52, 56, 58 & 60

Each page of the Council's website must be bilingual, fully functional with Welsh treated no less favourably than the English pages. The interface and menus on pages must be bilingual.

Any social media accounts, which belong to the Council, must treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Self-service machines must treat Welsh no less favourably e.g. parking ticket machines.

Action taken:

- Audit of entire website and its functionality was completed in September 2019
- Staff informed of process for publishing bilingual information on the Council's website
- Social Media Usage Guidance includes a section on the Welsh Language Standards.
- Service areas with social media accounts have been asked to acknowledge the requirements to comply. This guidance is currently being revised with the Welsh language section being strengthened to include information on where there are compliance issues currently identified
- Any issues on any webpages are actioned with urgency
- Parking machines give people the option to select language choice
- Audit of corporate social media accounts is ongoing and staff are reminded of compliance with the Welsh Language Standards
- The Planning Department's upgraded Public Access platform enables people to search, track and comment on planning applications in English and in Welsh
- A new website is at the final stage of the tendering process. The new website will be accessible and will consider the requirements of relevant Welsh Language Standards

Public Signage – Standards 62, 67, 70, 141, 142 & 143

New and renewed signs must be bilingual and treat Welsh no less favourably than English and the Welsh language must be positioned so it is likely to be read first.

Action taken:

- New and renewed signs are compliant
- FACTSHEET – Signage
- All translation work received is returned in the correct format. This is current practice
- **Welsh Language Standards Manual for CCBC Works Signage** produced in response to the number of service requests received regarding non-compliant works signage. This has been shared with officers and sub-contractors

- Signage developed for Council buildings are designed by the Council's in-house Graphic Design Team, who are fully briefed on the Welsh Language Standards, and who send proofs to the Translation Team prior to the signage being created

Visitors to Buildings – Standards 64, 65, 65A, 67 & 68

A bilingual reception service must be provided at the following Council buildings and the Welsh language must not be treated less favourably than the English language:

- Penallta House
- Bargoed, Risca, Rhymney, Blackwood, Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach libraries
- Caerphilly Visitor Centre
- Llancaiach Fawr Manor House
- Registration Services
- Caerphilly, Heolddu, Newbridge and Risca leisure centres

Signs must be displayed on receptions stating the Welsh language may be used. Welsh speaking staff at receptions must display a badge stating that they can speak Welsh.

Action taken:

- Services provided at reception is now by appointment only. Language preference is asked at first contact and a Welsh speaker is made available for the appointment should that be the language preference
- Training programme completed for staff on reception at Penallta House and Contact Centre. Further training being rolled-out along with ongoing support
- Cymraeg Gwaith - 10-hour online course rolled out to staff since September 2018
- All venues listed under Standard 64 have been given the 'Iaith Gwaith' poster to display in reception areas indicating that a Welsh language service is available
- Information available to staff on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the intranet
- All learners and Welsh speakers have received a 'Iaith Gwaith' lanyard or badge

Grant Awarding – Standards 71, 72 & 72A

Application forms for grants must be bilingual. Anything published regarding a grant must state that applications may be submitted in Welsh and will not be treated less favourably than the English, this includes timescales set for assessment etc.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – Grants
- A [Policy on Awarding Grants](#) was approved by Corporate Management Team in June 2022. This policy was shared with officers who administer grants, and published on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the intranet and on the Council's website.

Education Courses – Standards 84 & 86

Education courses must be offered in Welsh unless an assessment under Standard 86 has been carried out.

Action taken:

- Asking people if they wish to receive the course in Welsh at registration or enquiry point and then assessing the demand for the course through the medium of Welsh

Public Address - Standard 87

All public addresses must be bilingual with Welsh first.

Action taken:

- Fire Alarm Test and Minute Silence messages are bilingual
- Emergency Evacuation – English Only
- We are working with the Events Team to ensure that all public address messages are bilingual, Welsh first for all events
- Libraries' automated public address messages are fully compliant

Policy Making – Standards 88, 89 & 90

New, revised or reviewed policies must consider the effect the policy will have on opportunities to use Welsh and must not treat Welsh less favourably.

Action taken:

- An Integrated Impact Assessment has been implemented since 1 April 2021 and was developed using the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance on the Policy Making Standards. The impact assessment now requires officers to give more consideration on the impact on the Welsh language when developing proposals and policies
- Welsh Language Commissioner's good practice advice document has been published on the Welsh Language and Equalities page on the intranet for staff to view
- Advice document and recordings of the **Seminar: Considering the effects** have been published on the Council's Intranet and Management Network are aware of this information

HR Processes – Standards 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 112A, 114, 115, 116, 116A, 118, 119

We must ensure that our recruitment and internal HR processes are available in Welsh, where we ask language preference of applicants and staff, and communicate with them in the language of their choice. For staff this includes any disciplinary, complaints, grievance processes and the availability of certain HR Policies in Welsh.

Action taken:

- Please see recruitment update in **Section 6**
- There are a number of HR forms and policies available for staff in Welsh on the HR Portal on the Intranet

- The Equalities and Welsh Language Team already conduct and record one-to-one and Performance Development Reviews (PDR) meetings in Welsh with staff

Intranet / Internet Pages - Standards 122 & 124

The intranet home page must be bilingual, fully functional and treat Welsh no less favourably. English language pages must state that a corresponding Welsh page is available, with a link if applicable.

Action taken:

- A bilingual intranet is now current practice. Following the launch of our new intranet for staff, we are in the process of finetuning the pages to ensure that every page is fully accessible in both Welsh and English
- There is a dedicated section on the intranet for Welsh language information for staff to access, regarding the Welsh Language Standards, Welsh language training and information on Welsh translation
- There are a number of HR forms and policies available for staff in Welsh on the HR Portal on the Intranet

Welsh Language Training and Staff Communication – Standards 128, 129, 130, 133, 134 & 135

We must provide training in Welsh for staff if it is provided in English on: recruitment, performance management, complaints, disciplinary, induction, dealing with the public, health and safety, on using Welsh in meetings, interviews, complaints and during disciplinary procedures.

Staff must be given opportunities in work hours to receive basic Welsh lessons and, for employees who manage others, to receive training on using Welsh in their role as managers.

We must provide new employees with information on the Welsh language and text or logo for Welsh speaking employees to use in e-mail signatures that indicates they are willing to use Welsh, whether fluently or as a learner.

Welsh language version of contact details in emails and out of office, messages must also be in Welsh.

Action taken:

- FACTSHEET for staff – HR
- If any training requests were received, we would work with neighbouring councils to make courses viable
- The annual Welsh language training programme delivered since 2001, offers staff a variety of different courses, including online, self-study, residential, weekly and Welsh Language Awareness courses. 107 learners undertook these courses during 2023-2024
- Information on the Welsh language should be included in HR Induction Packs. The Equalities and Welsh Language Team are currently involved with the development of a new Induction Programme for new starters. They are also in discussion regarding the

development of a new learning management system for e-learning, with a view that elements of equalities and Welsh language being essential for all staff to complete

- The Equalities and Welsh Language Team are involved in the Social Services Induction Programme for new starters
- IT has provided all staff with a bilingual auto-signature for all emails
- IT has been unable to pre-populate a bilingual email out of office message, therefore desk stands were created for all staff to raise awareness of the requirement to ensure their out of office messages are bilingual

Workplace Signage – Standards 141,142 and 143

New and renewed signs must be bilingual and treat Welsh no less favourably than the English and the Welsh language must be positioned so it is likely to be read first.

Action taken:

- All public facing signage is bilingual and if new or renewed is produced Welsh first
- Signage developed for Council buildings are designed by the Council's in-house Graphic Design Team, who are fully briefed on the Welsh Language Standards, and who send proofs to the Translation Team prior to the signage being created

Welsh Language Strategy – Standards 145 & 146

We must produce and publish on the website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and facilitate its use more widely in the county borough. The Strategy must include –

- (a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5-year period concerned, and
- (b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

Action taken:

- The Council's second Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027 was implemented from 1 April 2022. [Click here to view](#)
- An action plan has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders, which includes the Council's services areas and key Welsh language organisations, through the Welsh Language Forum
- The Forum is working collaboratively with members of the Welsh in Education Forum and the More than just Words Forums to deliver on some key actions in the strategy

Complaints – Standards 147, 148, 149, 156, 158 (2), 162, 164 (2), 168 (a), 170 (2) (d)

We must keep a record of the number of complaints received which relate to compliance with the Standards.

Action taken:

- Reported annually in the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, which is published on the Council's website by the 30th June every year. See **Section 4 – Complaints from the Public**
- Equalities and Welsh language categories added to complaints system so that we can monitor if any complaints have an equalities or Welsh language element. This will help with annual reporting and to identify trends
- A new Complaints Programme will be going live in April 2024, where complaints and service requests across the Council will all be held centrally. The new programme includes an option to select if Welsh or Equalities are elements of any complaints and service requests. Moving forward this will make it easier to pull down reports to include in statutory on equalities and Welsh language annual reports

Publicising Compliance – Standards 161, 167, & 163

We must publish on the website a document that states the policy making standards we must comply with and how we do so, and this must be available in each office open to the public.

We must publish on the website a document that states the operational standards we must comply with and how we do so, and this must be available in each office open to the public.

We must have arrangements in place to oversee compliance with the policy making standards, publish the arrangements on the website and make the document available in each office open to the public.

Action taken:

- See - [CCBC Compliance Notice Report June 2021](#) on website
- Compliance Notice on website to allow any queries from the public to be dealt with by accessing the internet on their behalf

Staff Language Skills – Standards 151 & 170 (2) (a)

We must keep a record (following an assessment) of the number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of every financial year to include the skill level.

Action taken:

- Following correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner, and as outlined in our response dated 22 February 2022, a forward work plan has been developed to address a number of urgent matters relating to recruitment, including compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.
- A Welsh Language Skills Audit is being developed and will be rolled out in April 2024

Welsh Language Training – Standards 152, 170 (2) (b) & 170 (2) (c)

We must keep a record of the number of staff that attend training courses through the medium of Welsh and the percentage of the total number of staff who attended a course in Welsh. Please see **Section 5** of this report.

Recruitment – Standards 154, 170 (2) (ch) & 154

We must keep a record of the number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts with:

- (a) Welsh language skills essential
- (b) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post
- (c) Welsh language skills were desirable
- (d) Welsh language skills were not necessary

Action taken:

- Staff Language Skills, Welsh Language Training Provision and Recruitment are reported on annually in the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, which is published on the Council's website by the 30 June every year. See **Sections 4, 5 and 6** for details

2. Promotion

In order to encourage the use of the language in the county borough, we regularly engage in promotion activity with staff and with members of the public. Throughout the year, we choose key dates to take the opportunity to raise awareness of some of the key messages around the Welsh language.

Diwrnod Shwmae / Su'mae

Following a 10-week course for staff at Tŷ Iscoed Residential Home, we spoke to the residents about the Welsh language and what it means to them. The course was a great success with the staff who took part now able to express themselves using basic phrases.



Mae Gen i Hawl (Welsh Language Rights Day)/ Defnyddia Dy Gymraeg (Use your Welsh)

In December, we put out a series of social media posts encouraging members of the public to use their Welsh with council staff, whilst incorporating the Welsh Language Commissioner's campaign materials.



We also held a Clwb Clebran (Welsh Chat Club) and invited Coleg Gwent to join us on Welsh Language Rights Day. This club helps us to encourage staff to use Welsh wherever possible and also register staff onto courses. A video was produced at the event, where we recorded staff talking about the importance of Welsh in their day-to-day work and posted this on our social media channels.



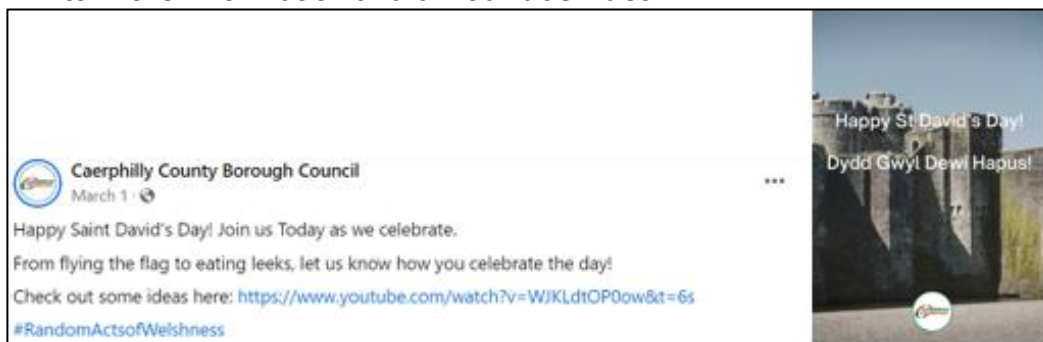
Dydd Santes Dwynwen



On Dydd Santes Dwynwen 2024, we put out social media posts with links explaining the story of Santes Dwynwen and encouraged members of the public to use Welsh language phrases.

St. David's Day

On 1 March, we posted 2 social media posts. The first was relating to St. David's Day and how people can get involved with the national campaign of #RandomActsOfWelshness including a link to more information and a YouTube video.



The second was incorporating the day as a part of the wider Council message to encourage residents to recycle their food.



Communicating with Residents - All Staff Email - Important information about Welsh translation and a Good Practice Guide Communicating with Residents

In February, an all-staff email was sent out reminding staff of their responsibilities when communicating with residents in relation to producing accessible and bilingual communication. Further information was also shared with staff regarding requests for Welsh translations and the timescales to consider when planning large pieces of work, which would require translation prior to publication. All guidance of this nature is available for staff on the Council's Intranet.

Caerphilly Council has a duty to comply with the Welsh Language Standards, meaning (in short) that all documents produced by the Council for the general public (including schools) must be bilingual.

Documents that provide Council contact information must also provide a telephone number AND an e-mail address; this means that communication is accessible for everyone.

For detailed information on translation requests, timelines, Welsh Language Standards and accessibility requirements, please visit the Equalities and Welsh Language pages on the staff intranet:



The "Communicating with Residents - Good Practice Guide" is a guidance document which provides important information and advice to staff on where equalities, Welsh language and accessibility regulations matter. Staff were informed that these must be considered when preparing Council documents and information, and also when communicating with our residents.

Pride Caerffili

In June 2023, Caerphilly Council hosted the first council-led pride event in Wales, in Caerphilly town centre.

The event was led by the Equalities and Welsh Language Team, together with a number of council service areas, Councillors and other stakeholders. There was a great emphasis on the event being bilingual, from the branding, the bilingual working group agendas, and even having a Welsh speaking compere on the main stage during the event.

Mr. Urdd was also present at the event showing support, and the event site was packed with visitors from all over the county and further afield. A youth area was organised at the bandstand, with many schools, including Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, performing. This event was an opportunity to show that the Welsh language has a place in the LGBTQ+ community.



Assemblies and Career Days

Valued Partner Awards



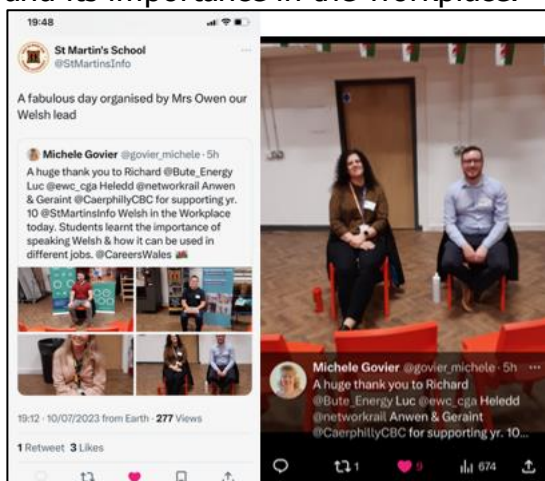
At Caerphilly Council, we pride ourselves on our partnership working with external organisations. For many years now, we've worked closely with Careers Wales to go to into schools and hold workshops and assemblies on Welsh in the workplace.

This year, our work was recognised by Careers Wales as we were nominated and shortlisted for the Valued Partner Award. Even though we did not win the award, it was a great achievement to be recognised for the work we've done throughout the years and continue to do in a number of schools in the county borough.

Over the year, a number of presentations were made to Year 10 and 11 pupils across a number of schools explaining how the language is used as a part of daily work. All these sessions consisted of promoting career and apprenticeship opportunities within the Council, often providing the students with the opportunity to ask questions or use their devices to search the Council's website for current job and apprenticeship opportunities.

St Martin's Comprehensive School

In July, the Senior Policy Officer and Policy Officer for Equalities and Welsh Language attended a day at St Martin's School to take part in a carousel event which involved pupils moving from employer to employer, asking questions about the use of the Welsh language and its importance in the workplace.



Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni

The Equalities and Welsh Language team has a long-running relationship with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni and are often approached to hold assemblies and careers days. In summer 2023, we went into the school to hold workshops with Year 11 pupils on Stereotyping and Showing Respect, which included elements of misogyny. In November 2023 and February 2024 we also delivered a careers with Caerphilly Council workshop with Year 10 students, with a focus on the importance their Welsh language skills are to the Council and other prospective employers.



Islwyn High School and St. Cenydd Community School



In November 2023, the Equalities and Welsh Language team held an assembly in Islwyn High School with year 11 pupils and again in March 2024 in St. Cenydd Community School with year 10 pupils. This work was done via Careers Wales promoting the Welsh language in the workplace, especially in jobs at Caerphilly Council. All of these pupils study at least Welsh short course at GCSE level.

Welsh Language Statistics 2023-2024

Number of translation requests received.....	4,294
Number of translation requests sent externally.....	60
Number of words translated in-house.....	2,175,562
Number of words translated externally.....	632,856
Number of staff learning Welsh.....	96
Number of Welsh Language Investigations since 2016.....	13

3. Complaints from the Public

Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations

We use this section of the report to detail any Welsh Language Commissioner Investigations. For the duration of 2023-2024, we received **0** new investigations for the fifth year in succession.

Members of the public can view the Council's Complaints Procedure for dealing with complaints made through the medium of Welsh via our website using the following link:

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Strategies,-plans-and-policies/Equalities/Welsh-language-Standards>

Complaints and Service Requests

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner, for example.

Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via People Services' internal processes. Equalities and Welsh language complaints are however something of a hybrid, in that a failure of process may be as a result of the attitudes or opinions of a staff member towards a particular group for example.

The Council's **Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028** has a specific objective, which commits the Council to use its service requests and complaints data to:

- **Equality Objective 1** – Service areas respond to all equality related complaints in a timely manner, and learn from them

During 2023-2024, **0** complaints and **2** service requests were received relating to the Welsh language. The **2** service requests were made up of the following:

No.	Detail(s) of Service Request(s)	Resolution
SR3	The Welsh display boards for the Leisure & Wellbeing Hub 2026 engagement event were incorrect.	Consultants contacted to correct the titles and to ensure that all Welsh text is proofread by the Translation Team prior to publication.
SR5	English only Health and Safety information regarding medicine control, shared by school with parent at a Welsh medium school.	School should not have shared this information with the parent. The Health and Safety Team are translating all policies and procedures and will share with all schools once finalised.

Complaints and Service Requests by Directorate

DIRECTORATE	COMPLAINTS	SERVICE REQUESTS
Economy and Environment	0	1
Education & Corporate Services	0	1
Social Services & Housing	0	0
TOTALS	0	2

4. Staff Language Skills

The ability to record Welsh language skills in terms of staff data and analysis is an integral part of the payroll system within Caerphilly County Borough Council. Financial year-end figures to 31 March 2023 are shown below and overleaf. The skills levels are measured in accordance with the language skills guidelines provided by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). On pages 27-29 of this report, you will see details of the language skills of staff per service area measures on a scale of 5 being 'Proficient' down to 'No Skills'.

Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	No Skills
Proficiency	Advanced	Intermediate	Foundation	Entry	-

At the time of reporting last year, the total number of staff and Welsh speakers within the organisation was as follows compared with this reporting year:

Council Totals for 2022-2023

Council Totals for 2023-2024

Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
8535	2100	24.6	8670	2258	26.04

Compared with last year, again we have recorded an increase in the number of Welsh speakers; this was across all directorates.

LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF WORKFORCE - WELSH LANGUAGE ABILITY BY SERVICE AREA AND FLUENCY AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

i) OVERALL STAFF FIGURES

<i>Economy and Environment</i>	2022-2023			2023-2024		
	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Infrastructure	974	123	12.62	928	125	13.46
Property Services	68	22	32.35	63	20	31.74
Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services	813	148	18.2	781	205	26.24

<i>Economy and Environment</i>	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Regeneration & Planning	323	68	21.05	350	70	20.0
Total	2149	355	16.51	2099	417	19.86

	2022-2023			2023-2024		
<i>Education & Corporate Services</i>	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Corporate Finance	167	28	16.76	167	25	14.97
Customer & Digital Services	153	41	26.79	150	43	28.66
Learning Education & Inclusion	456	101	22.14	483	114	23.60
Legal & Governance	64	16	25.00	67	17	25.37
People Services	105	30	28.57	112	36	32.14
Schools	3335	1131	33.91	3310	1166	35.22
Transformation Services	787	171	21.72	870	196	22.52
Total	4851	1461	30.11	4935	1538	31.16

	2022-2023			2023-2024		
<i>Social Services & Housing</i>	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Adult Services	1080	148	13.70	1073	148	13.79
Caerphilly Cares	26	7	26.92	34	9	26.47
Caerphilly Homes	491	68	13.85	537	78	14.52
Children Services	335	109	32.53	337	114	33.82
Joint Workforce Development Team	3	1	33.33	2	0	0.0
Total	1929	330	17.1	1974	349	17.67

NOTES

- The figures per service area for **Total Staff** and **Welsh Speakers** do not equal the overall total per Directorate due to some members of staff having more than one post within the organisation and those posts are within different service areas.
- As with previous reports, the figures in **4i)** above are the total number of people per directorate who have completed the Linguistic Skills form noting Welsh Language skills.
- The figures shown in **4ii)** to **4iv)** that follow refer to levels of fluency of Welsh speakers per service area and cannot be compared directly with the totals shown in **4i)** because for example, in Corporate Finance (the second section below in **4ii)** the "Level 4" column refers to a staff member who can read, speak, understand and write at Level 4, not 3 different members of staff.

ii) Economy and Environment

Infrastructure	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	12	1	2	8	88	11	3
Understanding	9	5	4	9	74	16	8
Writing	10	2	5	6	50	42	10
Total Staff	125						

Property Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	0	0	1	2	16	1	0
Understanding	0	0	1	3	13	3	0
Writing	0	0	0	2	7	11	0
Total Staff	20						

Public Protection Community & Leisure Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	17	9	13	31	130	5	0
Understanding	19	14	13	24	116	17	2
Writing	18	5	16	32	85	48	1
Total Staff	205						

Regeneration & Planning	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	9	1	2	16	36	6	0
Understanding	9	4	2	9	38	6	2
Writing	9	1	2	10	30	14	4
Total Staff	70						

iii) Social Services and Housing

Adult Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	11	8	2	10	106	11	0
Understanding	12	12	1	5	92	23	3
Writing	12	8	1	10	50	62	5
Total staff	148						

Caerphilly Cares	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	1	0	0	0	7	1	0

Caerphilly Cares	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Understanding	1	0	0	0	8	0	0
Writing	1	0	0	0	4	4	0
Total staff	9						

Caerphilly Homes	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	3	4	7	4	57	3	0
Understanding	3	6	4	1	41	19	4
Writing	2	4	6	2	25	35	4
Total staff	78						

Children Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	6	3	6	6	87	6	0
Understanding	8	7	2	7	72	16	2
Writing	6	5	3	5	58	34	3
Total staff	114						

Joint Workforce Development Team	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Understanding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Writing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total staff	0						

iv) Education and Corporate Services

Corporate Finance	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	0	1	0	2	20	2	0
Understanding	0	1	0	2	17	5	0
Writing	0	1	0	2	11	10	1
Total staff	25						

Customer & Digital Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	3	0	3	2	34	1	0
Understanding	3	3	1	3	25	5	3
Writing	4	1	1	0	22	13	2

Customer & Digital Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Total staff	43						

Learning Education & Inclusion	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	9	4	0	11	89	1	0
Understanding	10	2	4	4	85	7	2
Writing	8	3	2	6	61	31	3
Total staff	114						

Legal & Governance	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	0	1	1	2	12	0	1
Understanding	1	1	1	2	9	2	1
Writing	0	2	0	3	8	3	1
Total staff	17						

People Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	0	0	0	6	28	2	0
Understanding	0	2	1	2	27	4	0
Writing	0	0	1	4	19	12	0
Total staff	36						

Schools	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	201	48	41	235	614	22	5
Understanding	194	81	93	169	530	64	35
Writing	203	37	48	208	400	222	48
Total staff	1166						

Transformation Services	5	4	3	2	1	No Skills	Undisclosed
Listening / Speaking	11	11	4	19	137	13	1
Understanding	13	15	8	17	113	29	1
Writing	13	4	8	17	58	88	8
Total staff	196						

5. Welsh Medium Training Provision

Caerphilly Council has provided conversational Welsh courses for staff and elected members since 2001. Courses are also accessible to members of the public and staff members from partner organisations to attend. The courses range from basic taster courses for beginners to courses which cater for those who are now fluent Welsh speakers. During the initial lockdown, all courses moved to being held online; this in turn has led to the majority of lessons continuing to be held online, with a small number of staff attending lessons in person.

We run in-house training sessions including taster courses for staff which range from pronunciation of local place names and job titles to basic greetings including likes and dislikes.

The data for the Welsh courses offered and attended by Caerphilly CBC staff for the academic year 2023-2024 is as follows:

COURSE OFFERED	NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING
Taster Courses	55
Entry Level Year Courses	18
Foundation Level Year Courses	9
Intermediate Level Year Courses	6
Advanced Level Year Courses	2
Proficiency Courses	2
Withdrawn	4

Caerphilly Council is proud to support staff in a wide range of Welsh language courses via the Learn Welsh website. Courses include year-long courses, lasting between 30 and 32 weeks; online courses, 10-hour self-study modules; summer and residential schools; and taster and supplementary courses, each ranging from Entry Level to Proficiency level.

Caerphilly Staff Figures – 2018-2024

Academic Year	Year courses	Taster and Supplementary Courses	Total Number of Learners	(Numbers withdrawn)
2018 – 2019	53	91	144	(6)
2019 – 2020	62	185	223	(0)
2020 – 2021	27	219	246	(2)
2021 – 2022	35	-	35	(1)
2022 – 2023	50	11	61	(5)
2023 – 2024	41	55	96	(4)
TOTALS	268	561	805	(18)

The overall number of staff learning Welsh increased during this financial year to 96 from 61 last year. This coincides with us changing the way staff are offered courses and working more closely with the Employability Team to offer a wide range of taster courses to all

members of the team. Compared to previous years, we now have a much more streamlined registration process which has helped reduce our administration time.

Working closely with the National Learn Welsh centre, staff can start a Welsh course at any point during the academic year, and as noted, above courses vary in delivery style and location. Some staff have even followed intensive week-long courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn on the Llŷn Peninsula.

To further encourage staff to attend courses, we hold a 'Clwb Clebran' (chat club) for Welsh learners and speakers, to come together and to create a welcoming environment for staff to use their Welsh language skills. The network of staff support each other in the workplace, and help develop Welsh language skills for the workplace.

During 2023-2024, staff were given 2 opportunities to attend a Welsh Language Awareness course, which attracted **11** attendees across the two sessions. This course must be provided for staff in line with Standard 132:

You must provide training courses so that your employees can develop –

- (a) awareness of the Welsh language (including awareness of its history and its role in Welsh culture);
- (b) an understanding of the duty to operate in accordance with the Welsh language standards;
- (c) an understanding of how the Welsh language can be used in the workplace.

The Welsh Language Awareness courses can be very effective in changing attitudes and explore the following points:

1. Why do we need to give attention to the Welsh language?
2. What do we need to know about the language and its speakers?
3. How can we act in a way that facilitates the use of the Welsh language?

Staff who attended the sessions gave positive feedback, a comment from which is below:

Very insightful and aimed in the right way to all who attended both those who have some understanding and those who have little or no understanding of the language. Thoroughly enjoyed this session and has made me want to learn more.

In accordance with Standard 128, the council must provide training to staff through the medium of Welsh in the following areas:

You must provide training in Welsh in the following areas, if you provide such training in English –

- (a) recruitment and interviewing;
- (b) performance management;
- (c) complaints and disciplinary procedures;

- (ch) induction;
- (d) dealing with the public; and
- (dd) health and safety.

No requests from staff were received for any of the above listed courses to be delivered through the medium of Welsh, therefore there are no staff training figures recorded. The above information is published here to provide continuity with previous reports.

6. Recruiting to Empty Posts

A total of **685** new and vacant posts advertised since 31st March 2023 were categorised as posts where:

- (i) Welsh language skills were essential **9**
- (ii) Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post **13**
Welsh language training courses have been available to all staff and elected members free of charge since the 2001-2002 (see Section 5)
- (iii) Welsh language skills were desirable **663**
- (iv) Welsh language skills were not necessary **0**

The Welsh Language Skills Assessments in relation to vacant or new posts are undertaken as required by Standard 136, and have been recorded by Human Resources since October 2016. The assessment and supporting evidence then forms part of the business case that is required to gain permission to fill a vacant post or create a new one.

A Welsh Language Skills Assessment is completed for all vacant or new posts, which are advertised as Welsh desirable as a standard requirement. The assessment undertaken determines whether any new or vacant posts should be advertised as Welsh essential, in accordance with the job role and contact with the public.