

Welsh Language Annual Report 2020/21

Cymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh


wrexham
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
wrecsam

Contents

1.	Executive Summary3
2.	Introduction3
3.	Compliance with Service Delivery Standards4
4.	Compliance with Policy Making Standards5
5.	Compliance with Operational Standard6
6.	Complaints7
7.	Training and Recruitment	15
8.	Successes and Future Actions	16
	Appendix 1	18

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Welsh Language Standards came into force in 2016 and the Council is required to comply with 171 Standards. The Standards ensure that the Council treats the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality and respects the rights of Welsh speakers.
- 1.2 The Council has welcomed the introduction of the Standards and the opportunities to increase the provision of services through the medium of Welsh, as well as the rights they offer to both the public and our employees. We are proud of our Welsh heritage, culture and the Welsh language. The Council believes that respecting and meeting the language preferences of its customers is central to good and effective customer care. We provide services to the most vulnerable people in our community where accessing services in an individual's first language is especially important.
- 1.3 After 5 years operating under the Standards the Council has made good progress in complying with the Standards and promotion of the Welsh language and culture in Wrecsam. There are still areas for improvement especially around recruitment and workforce development and work in this area will be the focus for 2021/22. We have strengthened the links between the Welsh language and the Council Plan and continue to ensure that the Welsh language is mainstreamed throughout all of our priorities and policies.
- 1.4 Over the past few years we have received a number of complaints via the Welsh Language Commissioner which related to our contractors or partners. With more services now being delivered in different ways, we are committed to ensuring that these services are also available fully in Welsh.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Welsh Language sits within the portfolio of the Lead Member for Communities, Partnerships, Public Protection and Community Safety and senior officer responsibility lies with the Chief Officer Governance and Customer with support from the Chief Officer for Social Care who is the Council's Welsh Language Champion on the Senior Leadership Team. Issues pertaining to the Welsh language will be referred to the Executive Board or the Customers, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee. The Council also has a Welsh language Member and Officer Group.
- 2.2 Operational responsibilities for the implementation of the Standards sit within the Governance and Customer department. The Head of Service, Customer & Cymreig maintains the strategic overview with the Welsh Language Co-ordinator, managed by the Complaints & Welsh Language Compliance Lead, having day to day responsibility for compliance with the Standards. This includes promoting and facilitating the Welsh language in the County Borough and the delivery of the targets and actions in the Council's Welsh language 5-year promotion strategy.

- 2.3 The Council is required to publish an annual report by 30 June as set out in Standards 158, 164 and 170 in order to report on progress against compliance with the Standards in the following areas - Service Delivery, Operational and Policy Making.

A full copy of the Standards can be seen here

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/compliance_notice_wcbbc.pdf

- 2.4 This report focuses on the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

3. Compliance with Service Delivery Standards

- 3.1 During 2020/21 the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that many of our frontline services either had to stop altogether or had to be delivered in a different way and often with limited resources. With more services now being delivered in different ways it is important to ensure that these services are also available in Welsh. The Welsh Language Coordinator has worked with ICT and the procurement team to ensure that they are compliant with the service delivery standards.
- 3.2 To ensure that all employees are aware of the Service Delivery Standards, we regularly provide information to managers and staff on various aspects of the Standards in order to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. All employees are required to ensure they are compliant with the Standards and to seek advice from the Welsh Language Coordinator if they are unsure on a particular matter. In 2020/21, the Council was the subject to a number of investigations which in some cases led to the introduction of new processes to avoid any future non-compliance in those areas. See Section 6.2 the complaints and investigation sections.
- 3.3 The new corporate website was launched on 29 May 2020 and a great deal of work has gone into making sure that the Welsh language is correct, clear and consistent throughout. There are still a number of pages which are being transferred from the old website and these will be translated and proof read before going live on the new website. The web team also uses a system called 'site improve' which flags potential Welsh typos for review. We have found that in most cases this system is suggesting the correct Welsh spellings. The suggested spellings must be approved by the Welsh Language Coordinator but they can also be amended so that the system learns the correct Welsh word or spelling for future use. We accept that some errors can and will slip through the net from time to time but our proofing system and the 'site improve' software should vastly reduce the numbers of errors going forward.
- 3.4 A departmental Welsh language officers' co-ordination group operates within the Council. The aim of the group is to champion the Welsh language across the Council, promoting the use of Welsh by employees, share good practice within service areas and contribute to initiatives that seek to increase the use of Welsh.

4. Compliance with Policy Making Standards

- 4.1 As noted in the 2019/20 annual report, the equality impact assessment has now been reviewed and strengthened. This ensures that Welsh language is given proper consideration for any new or existing policies decisions and to assess any potential negative implications for the Welsh language. It also seeks to identify opportunities to promote and increase the use of Welsh in the community. These will be spot checked periodically by the Cymraeg team.
- 4.2 The Council also undertakes an annual survey which asks questions about residents' views about the Welsh language when they contact the Council and also about usage both in a social setting and online. The 2019/20 questionnaire was broadened to include questions aimed at Welsh learners and also Year 11 and 12 Welsh speaking pupils. Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not feasible to undertake the annual survey in 2020/21 as it would be based on a period where many services were closed and social restrictions were in place. As more council services begin to open up we will assess whether or not to carry out the survey in 2021/22 and we will update on this in the 2021/22 annual report.

5. Compliance with Operational Standard

- 5.1 Dirwnod Hawliau / Rights Day on 06 December 2020 to raise awareness of people's rights to receive services in Welsh. It is also aimed to raise awareness of the rights of employees in Wales. For 'Diwrnod Hawliau' 2020 we raised awareness with staff of some of the key rights that members of the public have when dealing with the Council.
- 5.2 The Council has created a dedicated site on its intranet that outlines guidance regarding the Standards, what is expected of employees in operating the Standards, FAQs, the rights of Welsh speakers and opportunities for learning Welsh. A new staff intranet platform is currently being populated and we will revise all of the guidance to staff before migrating the content to the new platform to ensure that it is current and easy to navigate.
- 5.3 As detailed in the previous annual monitoring report, there was a noticeable decrease in uptake of Welsh language courses by staff in 2019/20 and the Welsh Language Coordinator has worked with Coleg Cambria and Workforce development team to improve on this for 2020/21. As a result we have more staff learning Welsh this year and we will work to increase that further for 21/22 via the 'Work Welsh' programme.
- 5.4 The Cysgliad software package has been provided for all Welsh speakers and Welsh learners in the Council who have requested it. This can also be installed directly by the user via the 'Software Centre' on their PC and laptops. This includes two apps 'Cysill' which checks grammar and spellings and Cysgeir which is a digital English – Welsh dictionary.
- 5.5 Resources to support Welsh learners and speakers are available on the staff intranet and are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain current and useful.
- 5.6 Instructions on how to set up the 'laith Gwaith' on e-mail signature has been provided and all auto-signatures are now bilingual. All staff job titles are bilingual as are all 'out of office' messages.
- 5.7 The HR department are working on improving the Welsh language assessment for new and vacant posts in order to increase the amount of frontline jobs categorised as Welsh Essential. This will enable the Council to provide more service fully in Welsh.
- 5.8 The language skills of employees can be seen in the Performance Monitoring section, Appendix 3 below.

6. Complaints

- 6.1 During 2020/21 the Council received 1 complaint from members of the public and these have been recorded, investigated and documented as below.

Complaint	Action	Date	Financial Year
Complaint that Welsh version of an address was not on the Royal Mail address finder.	Advised that this is the responsibility of Royal Mail and to raise direct with them.	20/09/2020	2020/21

- 6.2 In addition, the Council has been the subject of 16 investigations that have been instigated by the Commissioner in response to complaints made directly to him about alleged non-compliance on the Council's part with regard to its Welsh language Standards. These investigations have been conducted under section 71 of the Welsh Language Measure (2011) Act and are summarised below. –

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG724	07/04/2020	Website/ Portal	Covid-19 related article on the council's newsblog was not available in Welsh at the same time and the English version - Link to news article from the corporate website went to the English article.	Governance & Customer	Discontinued	The Commissioner was satisfied that we were under immense pressure at the time with emergency public safety messaging being announced daily. The communications team have sent out a huge amount of important information over the past 12 months and continue to publish all articles and social media posts bilingually.
CSG731	10/06/2020	Literature/ Documents	<p>1. The information on the envelope in which the 'Council Tax Demand Notice' was sent is in English only</p> <p>2. The "FAQ" documents and direct debit instructions are set up and folded in such a way that English appears first.</p> <p>3a. On the back of the notice itself, under the heading "Dewisiadau Talu Poblogaidd", part of the information under the "Debyd Uniongyrchol" subheading is set in a smaller font than the surrounding text and also smaller than the corresponding English text.</p> <p>3b. The Welsh language in the section in question is incorrect and inconsistent compared to the beginning of the 'sentence'</p>	Finance & ICT	Full Investigation	<p>Pending</p> <p>All issues have been corrected and evidence sent to the commissioner.</p>

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
			<p>4. Under the "Credyd neu Ddebyd" subheading, an apostrophe is missing in the word "ddefnyddion".</p> <p>5. In the "Cwestiynau Cyffredin" document, the Welsh text is in a smaller font with less space between the lines than the corresponding text in the English version.</p> <p>6. There is a mixed use of the terms 'y dreth gyngor' and 'treth y cyngor.' Envelope Council Tax Bills</p>			
CSG748	31/07/2020	Website/ Portal	The Commissioner received a complaint from a member of the public regarding the fact that key information about the Coronavirus is more recently available on the Council's English language website (latest release on 17.07.2020) compared to the Welsh website (latest release on 04.07.2020). Screenshots were provided by the complainant to support his complaint.	Governance & Customer	Full Investigation	<p>Pending</p> <p>The Communication team were given access to the corporate website to avoid any delay in updating the list of bulletins.</p> <p>Evidence sent to the commissioner.</p>
CSG749	31/07/2020	Signage	<p>Interactive Road Sign - '30 /Slow / Araf'</p> <p>Complaint that the Welsh 'Araf' should be positioned above the 'Slow'.</p>	Environment & Technical	Discontinued	<p>The sign in question was subject of a previous investigation ref: CSG582 which we were required to correct in accordance with the enforcement actions.</p> <p>As we were within the agreed timescale to complete the enforcement actions, the investigation was discontinued.</p>

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG772	22/09/2020	Social Media /Signage	<p>The first element relates to the fact that Wrexham Council's Welsh language Twitter account shared the English language 'Keep Wales Safe' message from the Welsh Government account on the 8th of September, although a Welsh version was available. The second element relates to the fact that Wrexham Council's Welsh-language account shared a message from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board on the 7th of September that contained inaccurate Welsh (a picture that conveys social distancing measures, not self-isolation measures such as which is indicated at the bottom of the picture).</p> <p>*The third element relates to the fact that a note for the attention of an interpreter is placed on a parking ticket machine 'Sylwch ar yr arwyddion gyda chyfarwyddiadau a gwybodaeth.'</p>	Governance & Customer	Full Investigation	<p>Pending</p> <p>* Only the third element is being investigated.</p>
CSG774	29/09/2020	Website/ Portal	<p>The Commissioner has received a complaint from a member of the public on 22/09/2020 regarding receiving an English only e-mail 'Bin Collection Reminder' from Wrexham@public.govdelivery.com on 17/09/2020 and an English only e-mail 'WCBC MyAccount payment confirmation' from noreply@wrexham.gov.uk on 15/09/2020. The complainant provided a copy of the e-mails, and these are attached for your attention.</p>	Environment & Technical	Full Investigation	<p>Pending</p> <p>We are awaiting further guidance on this from the Welsh Language Commissioner.</p>

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG783	13/10/2020	Literature/ Documents	The Commissioner received a complaint from a member of the public on 02/10/2020 regarding the fact that the complainant does not receive some postal letters with the Welsh version of the address, as the Welsh version does not appear on the Royal Mail's PAF (Postcode Address File). It is the County Council's duty to approve the address bilingually, and to confirm this with Royal Mail in order to include the Welsh and English versions on the PAF system.	Planning & Regulatory	Discontinued	Agreed that this is not the responsibility of the Council as Royal Mail are a private company and therefore we can only provide the information to them. After discussions with Royal mail, building control and the environment department a new process has been agreed to ensure that Welsh versions of addresses can be used by residents.
CSG790	20/10/2020	Social Media	A complaint that @TyPawb's Twitter account publishes English tweets before publishing the Welsh version	Housing & Economy	Discontinued	The Commissioner agreed that in this case the tweets were being posted intentionally in that order to comply with the Standards (Welsh above the English version) as they were posted from bilingual twitter account. Therefore no breach of the Standards was committed.
CSG791	20/10/2020	Signage	A complaint that an English only sign has been placed on the approach from Acrefair to a roundabout where the A539 and B5605 cross near Ruabon.	Environment & Technical	Full Investigation	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG792	20/10/2020	Signage	A complaint regarding an electronic speed limit sign below the number 30 on the B5606 to Ruabon from Johnstown direction. The element of the sign showing the speed limit lights up, but no Welsh text appears on the sign.	Environment & Technical	Discontinued	This sign was the subject of CSG582 and therefore to make the sign compliant with the Welsh Standards the text on the sign was disconnected intentionally so that only the '30' illuminated if a car approached it at speed.
CSG793	20/10/2020	Posters/ Notices	A complaint about an English only sign showing a map and key for footpaths at Pont-faen Bridge, Chirk, on the B4500. The complainant attached a copy of the sign and a copy is included for your attention.	Environment & Technical	Full Investigation	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.
CSG794	20/10/2020	Posters/ Notices	Bus timetables in English only	Environment & Technical	Discontinued	Not WCBC
CSG798	04/11/2020	Website/ Portal	Freedom Leisure Website -The complainant noted that the English language version of the website had to be relied upon to understand the meaning in some places, as the standard of the Welsh language was so poor. The complainant highlights a few examples from this page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Or 7fed o Medi" - with the number zero instead of the letter O and the apostrophe missing ▪ "Mae pob amser dosbarth yn syfrdanol o 10 munud..." According to the complainant, the English language web site must be used to obtain understandable information. 	Education and Early Intervention	Initial Enquiry	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG799	04//11/2020	Website/ Portal	The Commissioner has received a complaint from a member of the public on 03/11/2020 regarding defects and mistakes with a Welsh language website to register for a school place in Wrexham.	Education and Early Intervention	Full Investigation	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.
CSG807	20/11/2020	Literature/ Documents	<p>The Commissioner received a complaint from a member of the public on 19/11/2020 regarding the fact that he received correspondence in English only from the Council on 16/11/2020 reminding him to apply for a school place for a child for September 2021. The letter explained bilingually on one sheet of paper that the Council has not yet received a request from him.</p> <p>In addition, the complainant claimed that the letter was folded so that the English version was on the outside and therefore the use of English was promoted at the expense of the Welsh language. Also enclosed was a copy of a letter dated 28 September 2020 and an application form for a school admission place – both documents in English only.</p>	Education and Early Intervention	Full Investigation	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.
CS019	11/03/2021	Literature/ Documents	Email re: Green Bin Service sent in English	Governance & Customer	Initial Enquiry	Pending Representations sent to the commissioner.

Investigations ongoing at the time the 2019/20 report was published:

Ref	Received	Complaint Subject	Complaint	Department	Outcome	Action taken
CSG719	20/11/2020	Literature/ Documents	Correspondence regarding the green bin collection service - Complaint that a letter was sent in English only following payment for the service over the phone.	Environment & Technical	Upheld	Enforcement actions placed on the Council to assess samples of similar documents and to send the letter in question bilingually from then on. Complied with all enforcement actions and sent confirmation to the Commissioner.

6.3 Enforcement Actions

Following investigations undertaken by the Welsh Language Commissioner the Council received a number of enforcement notices where complaints are upheld. These enforcement actions sometimes require the Council to revise or introduce new processes and procedures to avoid repeated failure to comply. As a result of this we have introduced a number of positive measures e.g. guidance document for contracted partners, online training module for call centre staff, new process for assessing vacant posts to name a few.

Some decisions/enforcement actions have highlighted inconsistencies in how a particular standard has been interpreted. We continue to work closely with the Welsh Language Commissioner and his officers to ensure that we are interpreting the Standards correctly when delivering services to the public.

7. Training and Recruitment

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	ACTUAL PERFORMANCE
The number and % of staff who have received training in the Welsh language to a specific level of compliance	During 2020/21 39 members of staff studying Welsh via Coleg Cambria and which equates to 0.9% of the non-teaching workforce* This is an increase on the figure in 2019/20 where only 14 members of staff (0.3%) undertook Welsh language training
The number and % of staff receiving Welsh language awareness training in the Welsh language to a specific level of compliance	During 2020/21 314 members of staff completed the module which equated to 7.62% of the workforce. Total number of staff to complete the module to date is 1772 which is 42.99% of the workforce.
The number and % of staff in the organisation's service who can speak Welsh (i) By department (ii) According to grade or post (iii) Per workplace	See Appendix 1 (below) for more detail.
The number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts were:	Welsh language skills were essential - 20 Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post - 0 Welsh language skills were desirable - 197 Welsh language skills were not necessary - 197

8. Successes and Future Actions

- 8.1 The Council formally adopted its 5-year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in March 2017. This was in direct response to Standard 145, which required the Council to produce and publish a 5-year strategy which sets out how it proposes to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of Welsh more widely in the County Borough. It also seeks to see an increase in the number of Welsh speakers.
- 8.2 The Strategy will be revised in 2021 to set out new targets and areas for improvement for 2022-27 and to support the Welsh Government's themes and vision in its Welsh Language Strategy Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.
- 8.3 **HWB Cymraeg @ Focus Wales**
Unfortunately the pandemic meant that we were unable to go ahead with the planned HWB Cymraeg @Focus Wales 2020 due to the restrictions on mass gatherings. The event has been rescheduled for 07/08/09 October 2021 and we will work with the events team, Tŷ Pawb and Focus Wales to ensure that all activities are delivered safely and in accordance with the current guidelines.
- 8.4 **St David's Day 2021/ Dydd Gŵyl Dewi 2021**
In partnership with Flintshire County Council, Tŷ Pawb and Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam we organised a week full of virtual celebrations and activities to celebrate St. David's Day between March 1st- 5th. Finishing with a live streamed performance from Welsh language band 'Bandicoot'. A virtual Eisteddfod was held as part of the celebrations with a number of competitions for the community such as:
- **Cooking with locally sourced ingredients**
Send a picture / Video of your culinary masterpiece along with the recipe
 - **Art**
Send a picture of an item created from recycled materials on the theme 'Welsh History.'
 - **Photography**
Send a photo on the theme 'Nature' or 'The Beauty of Wales'
 - **Limerick**
Write a limerick with the first line including the name 'Dewi.'

The event was a huge success with hundreds of children and residents taking part. The following videos were released on St David's Day and throughout the week via Menter Iaith and Tŷ Pawb social media channels:

[Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Hapus \(Wrecsam\)](#)

[Gêm Bêl Droed \(Wrecsam\) - Bryan Martin Davies](#)

[Bandicoot](#)

8.5 WCBC Eisteddfod 2021

Unfortunately it was not possible to deliver the staff eisteddfod in the way we would have wanted due to social restrictions. It is hoped that we will be able to build on the success of the 2020 staff eisteddfod for 2022.

8.6 Diwrnod Hawliau'r Gymraeg / Welsh Language Rights Day – 6 December 2020

This is a new initiative launched by the commissioner's 'Hybu' (Promotion) team to raise awareness of Welsh language services and residents' rights to access them. On this day, all local authorities in Wales are encouraged to promote the availability of Welsh language services and we chose to promote our Welsh language Registrars service.

[Please follow the link to Wrexham Council news article:](#)

8.7 Royal Mail Postal Address Finder - PAF

We have improved the process for updating Royal mail with any bilingual addresses we have on file. Royal Mail only includes Welsh versions of addresses if there is a bilingual street nameplate on site. The environment department will provide image proofs of all signage we have on file and these will be added to the RM database in due course. This will allow residents to use Welsh versions of their addresses for post and parcels.

8.8 Welsh Medium Education-The Best of Both Worlds

To coincide with the school admissions applications in January we published a new booklet offering information on the advantages of a bilingual education. The booklet offers a guide to the benefits of bilingualism, dispels certain myths, offers case studies and also signposts to further Welsh language resources and organisations.

We have also produced a [case study video that showcases the benefits of a Welsh education.](#)

In recognition of our multi-cultural community we also arranged for the booklet translated into Portuguese and Polish.



Appendix 1

Employee Welsh Language Skills Monitoring

Introduction

We have three categories for which data is gathered as part of our Welsh Language skills equality monitoring:

- 1) Listening/Speaking
- 2) Reading/Understanding
- 3) Writing

In each of these categories employees are requested to assess/record their own level of Welsh language proficiency based on the following criteria:

Level 0 - Not at all/Entry

Level 1 - A little/Foundation

Level 2 - Intermediate/Some

Level 3 - Advanced/Moderate

Level 4 - Full Proficient

Level 5 - Full Proficient (Technical)

This information is provided by employees at recruitment stage, when an employee updates their personal record or (for some departments) during the employees' personal development review.

This data is based on employees of the Council (excluding school based education employees) as at **31/03/2021**

Employees with Welsh language skills by grade		EMPLOYEES WITH WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN 1 OR MORE CATEGORIES			
Gradd	No. of Emps.	Level 1 +	%	Level 3 +	%
G02 - G06	1,721	169	9.8%	26	1.5%
G07 - G10	956	186	19.5%	40	4.2%
G11 - G15	162	29	17.9%	15	9.3%
Soulbury, Youth and Centrally employed Teachers	127	21	16.5%	3	2.4%
Craft Workers	115	2	1.7%	0	0%
Chief Officers/ Executive	8	3	37.5%	1	12.5%
Grand Total	3,089	410	13.3%	85	2.8%

This does not include schools

Employees with Welsh language skills per department		EMPLOYEES WITH WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN 1 OR MORE CATEGORIES			
Department	No. of Emps.	Level 1 +	%	Level 3 +	%
Chief Executive Services	79	19	24.1%	4	5.1%
Education and Early Intervention Service	330	59	17.9%	14	4.2%
Environment and Technical Services	458	27	5.9%	3	0.7%
Finance	175	39	22.3%	8	4.6%
Governance and Customer Services	102	26	25.5%	9	8.8%
Housing and Economy Service	1155	137	11.9%	29	2.5%
Planning and Regulatory Services	79	14	17.7%	0	0.0%
Social Care Services	711	89	12.5%	18	2.5%
Grand Total	3,089	410	13.3%	85	2.8%