

WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Cymraeg



This document is also available in Welsh



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Executive Summary | 3 |
| 2. Introduction | 4 |
| 3. Compliance with Service Delivery Standards | 4 |
| 4. Compliance with Policy Making Standards | 5 |
| 5. Compliance with Operational Standard | 5 |
| 6. Complaints | 6 |
| 7. Training and Recruitment | 8 |
| 8. Successes and Future Actions | 9 |
| Appendix 1 | 12 |

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 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 in Wrexham. 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 7 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 Wrexham. There are still areas for improvement especially around recruitment and workforce development and work in this area will continue in 2023/24. 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 year we have received a fewer complaints via the Welsh Language Commissioner which demonstrates that we are improving and striving to deliver more services in Welsh.
- 1.5 On 06 December 2022 the results of the 2021 we received the results of the 2021 Census which unfortunately show a further decline in Welsh speakers across all but four of the Welsh local authorities. In Wrexham there has been a 0.7% reduction in the overall number of Welsh speakers compared with 2011, which is approximately 700 fewer Welsh speakers aged 3-15 in the county borough. Whilst this is of course disappointing, initial analysis also shows an encouraging increase in the numbers of Welsh speakers aged 16-44 in Wrexham, up 1.7% compared with 2011. This demographic is pivotal as it includes people leaving education to start work, those planning to raise a family and eventually apply for school places.
- 1.6 On the 09 May the executive board adopted the revised [Welsh Language Promotional Strategy 2022 - 2027](#) which sets out how the council will promote Welsh language and culture in Wrexham. The strategy was been drafted by the council and a group of key stakeholders to ensure that the actions and targets within it are achievable and lead to the desired outcomes. The independent review of the previous promotional strategy undertaken by Nico.cymru can be [found here](#), we welcomed the review and recommendations that were put forward.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Welsh Language sits within the portfolio of the Lead Member for Environment 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 Officer, 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 promotional 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](#).
- 2.4 This report focuses on the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

3. Compliance with Service Delivery Standards

- 3.1 Following our annual review meeting with our area Welsh language compliance officer, we asked to undertake a review of our reception areas. As a result of the review we identified that there are a number of reception areas that cannot offer a service in Welsh due a lack of Welsh speakers. The Welsh language officer is working with managers and team leaders to look at improving these services through recruitment and training of existing staff.
- 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 Officer if they are unsure on a particular matter. In 2022/23, the Council was the subject to a number of investigations conducted by the Welsh Language Commissioner. See Section 6.2 the complaints and investigation sections.
- 3.3 A departmental Welsh language Champions 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. This group will also play a major role in the planning and delivery of the 2025 National Eisteddfod.

4. Compliance with Policy Making Standards

- 4.1 A new integrated impact assessment tool is in the final stages of testing and will be launched later in 2023. This will ensure that full consideration is given to the impact of any new policies or major projects on the Welsh language and Culture. Once an assessment is completed this will be sent automatically to the Welsh language officer to monitor the responses and challenge where necessary.
- 4.2 In previous years the Council undertook an annual survey which asked residents' views about the Welsh language when they contact the Council and also about their use of Welsh both in a social setting and online. We will revise the questionnaire to include questions targeting Welsh learners and our Welsh speaking secondary school pupils.

5. Compliance with Operational Standard

- 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 replacement staff intranet platform was launched in 2021 and we revised all of the guidance for staff before migrating the content to the new platform to ensure that it is current and easy to navigate. This content will soon be available in Welsh along with all mandatory e-learning modules.
- 5.3 The Welsh speaker's network hosts a 'Paned a Sgwrs' group at Tŷ Pawb every three weeks. Its aim is to give staff who a learning Welsh the opportunity to practice it, gain confidence and to hear spoken informal Welsh. It is also important that Welsh speakers and learners within the council know each other in order to normalise everyday use of the language in the workplace.
- 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. The Welsh language officer reviewed the auto responses from all of our published email addresses and contacted any that were not compliant with the standards which were corrected promptly.
- 5.7 Recorded examples of phone messages are available on the staff intranet for use on staff mobile device or answer machines.

5.8 The HR team have improved the Welsh language assessment section of the vacancy management form. This has led to more posts being advertised 'Welsh Essential' and those where Welsh must be learnt to an agreed level.

5.9 The language skills of employees can be seen in the Performance Monitoring section, Appendix 3 below.

6. Complaints

6.1 During 2022/23 the Council received 3 complaints from members of the public and these have been recorded, investigated and documented as below.

| Complaint | Action | Date Received | Department |
|--|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Letter sent in English only by housing estate office | Contacted the manager at Rhos Estate office and recommended that the member of staff complete the Welsh language Awareness module. Email sent to the customer. | 29/09/2022 | Housing & Economy |
| Calling card left by WCBC contracted worker | Contacted chief officer for housing to ensure that all contractors are aware of their obligations. | 14/12/2022 | Housing & Economy |

6.2 In addition, the Council has been the subject of 4 investigations that have been instigated by the Deputy Commissioner in response to complaints made directly to her 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 |
|--------|------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CS1008 | 05/05/2022 | Telephony | call to debtors line and mistakes on auto email receipt | Governance & Customer | Upheld | Enforcement Action Plan |
| CS1023 | 12/09/2022 | Literature/ Documents | Letter sent from housing estate office in English only | Housing & Economy | Partially Upheld | Enforcement Actions |
| CS1053 | 29/09/2022 | Service | Lack of Welsh Swimming Lessons and Freedom Leisure Swimming progress web portal not available in Welsh | Finance & ICT | Partially Upheld | Enforcement Actions |
| CS1110 | 29/02/2023 | Service | Freedom Leisure Auto Email, General Email and Telephone Call | Finance & ICT | Ongoing | Response sent to the commissioner |

6.3 Enforcement Actions

Following investigations undertaken by the Welsh Language Commissioner the Council receives 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. Mandatory e-learning training modules for all staff:

- 'The Welsh Language Standards - Guidance for achieving a bilingual service' online.
- 'Handling Welsh Language Calls'- For all staff who answer telephone calls to the public
- 'Welsh Language Awareness' - All staff and elected members.

These modules will soon be made available to our contracted partners who deliver any customer service based function to our residents or visitors.

A further module is currently being developed aimed at managers and team leaders which will provide guidance on: policy making, workforce planning, using Welsh in the workplace, hosting meetings / conferences, procurement and contracts.

We continue to work closely with the Welsh Language Commissioner and her officers to ensure that we are interpreting the Standards correctly when delivering services to the public.

7. Training and Recruitment

- 7.1 We continue to experience problems appointing Welsh speakers to front facing roles. Despite our best efforts to increase visibility of our vacancies, some managers receive very few applications from suitable Welsh speakers. The Welsh language officer along with representatives from Welsh language county forum have formed a 'Welsh Recruitment' sub group to work in partnership across Flintshire and Wrexham to raise awareness of these opportunities. The council's press and marketing team trialled some paid adverts on Welsh language job sites, LinkedIn and Indeed.com which has been successful in increasing the number of applicants, this will continue subject to available budget.
- 7.2 In the past year we have seen a positive increase in the numbers of staff learning Welsh at Coleg Cambria and via the online 'Work Welsh courses. As detailed in the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy 2022-2027, all staff and elected members will achieve a minimum of level 1 by 2027 therefore we expect that the numbers will dramatically increase and our hope is that more staff continue to learn to higher levels thereafter

| PERFORMANCE INDICATOR | ACTUAL PERFORMANCE |
|---|---|
| The number and % of staff who have received training in the Welsh language to a specific level of compliance. | <p>During 2022/23</p> <p>14 members of staff studying Welsh via Coleg Cambria which equates to 0.44% of the non-teaching workforce*</p> <p>Additionally, 6 members of staff completed an 8 week pilot course and another 8 signed up to the free online courses via Dysgu Cymraeg.</p> |
| The number and % of staff receiving Welsh language awareness training. | <p>During 2022/23</p> <p>444 members of staff completed the 'Welsh Language Awareness' module which equated to 13.95% of the workforce.</p> <p>Total number of staff to complete the module to date is 1592 which is 50% of the workforce.</p> |
| The number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as posts were | <p>Welsh language skills were essential - 60</p> <p>Welsh language skills needed to be learnt when appointed to the post - 7</p> <p>Welsh language skills were desirable - 625</p> <p>Welsh language skills were not necessary - 600</p> |
| 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 |

8. Successes and Future Actions

- 8.1 The Welsh language officer and the education department commissioned two promotional videos highlighting the advantages of a bilingual education. The videos will be used each time there is an application period for school places so that parents are fully aware of the Welsh medium options in Wrexham. They also promote the Trochi 'Welsh Immersion' scheme which gives children the option to transfer to Welsh medium education up to year 7.

[Have you considered Welsh medium education for your child?](#) **Wrexham Council News**

[Applying for a nursery place for your child?](#) **Wrexham Council News**

Further promotional videos are planned for each of the Welsh medium schools later in 2023.

- 8.2 With the exciting prospect of hosting the National Eisteddfod in 2025 this gives us a fantastic opportunity to promote the language and culture to our residents and visitors in the run up and over the event itself. We want the whole community to be part of the celebrations and this will be a one of the running themes in the planning and delivery of this national event.

8.3 HWB Cymraeg @ Focus Wales 2022 /2023

The event was again a huge success delivering a host of activities for children, Welsh lessons during the day followed by new and established Welsh language and international acts into the night. Creating more opportunities for residents to use Welsh socially is an important step to normalising its daily use and to improve the perception of Wrexham as a thriving Welsh speaking town. Equally important is that the children in our Welsh medium schools get to use their Welsh outside of the classroom.

This year the HWB Cymraeg attracted positive media coverage from Radio Wales, Radio Cymru and S4C with live interviews from outside the Tipi, Tŷ Pawb and Glyndŵr University for the Welsh TV show Heno.

[HWB Cymraeg yn ôl eto ar gyfer FOCUS Wales!](#) **Newyddion Cyngor Wrexham**

[Canolfan Gymraeg a diwylliannol 'Hwb Cymraeg' yn dychwelyd unwaith eto yn FOCUS Wales](#)
Newyddion Cyngor Wrexham

8.4 St David's Day 2023/ Dydd Gŵyl Dewi 2023

In partnership with Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam we held a well-attended St David's day with a huge parade through the City centre led by Band Cambria and performances from Andy Hickie, local choirs, singers, bands and dance groups. The event was a huge success with hundreds more children and residents taking part than ever before.

8.5 Dydd Miwsig Cymru / Welsh Language Music Day

In partnership with Welsh Government, Focus Wales and Ty Pawb we held two days of Welsh language a bilingual music to celebrate Dydd miwsig Cymru. This featured some of the best Welsh acts and new up and coming artists. This event is now considered as the main DMC event in North wales and goes from strength to strength each year.



8.6 Welsh in the Workplace – Ysgol Rhosnesni

In partnership with Careers Wales, Wrexham council and major local employers, the speed-networking event saw individual groups of year 6 pupils spend 10-minute sessions with each employer, and quiz them on details such as their day-to-day work, how much they use Welsh during their working day and the sort of skills and qualifications needed to fulfil their role.

The pupils attending have the chance to speak with staff from organisations including:

- Scottish Power Energy Networks
- Principality Building Society
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Welsh Water
- DFS4 /Big Ideas Wales role model
- Wrexham County Borough Council
- Excell Supply
- Coleg Cambria
- Menter Iaith
- The Presbyterian Church

These events are now annual and are an important step towards creating a bilingual workforce for the future.

8.7 Welsh Language Music Workshop – Ysgol Morgan Llwyd

In the run up to Focus Wales music festival in May, the council in partnership with Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam and Focus Wales, organised a Welsh Language gig and music workshop at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd. This was Hosted Welsh rap artist [Eädyth Crawforth](#) (who was due to perform at the Festival) and supported by the schools own band giving them an opportunity to perform alongside a professional artist. The aim of the workshop is to showcase new contemporary Welsh music and to raise awareness that pupils can continue using Welsh outside of school. Both the pupils and staff enjoyed the event thoroughly and it is planned to repeat this and expand it to other secondary schools in Wrexham for 2023.

8.8 School Visits & Apprenticeships

As a follow-on to the 'Welsh in the workplace' event mentioned above, it is vital that we continue promoting the advantages of using Welsh for career prospects especially at our Welsh medium high school.

On 05/09/22 to The Welsh language officer together with representatives from HR, Social Care and Glyndŵr University attended Ysgol Morgan Llwyd to speak with the sixth form classes about career opportunities and the importance of continuing to use the language post education.

Information sheets relating to our apprenticeship scheme were handed out to the students and presentations were delivered by each representative highlighting the increasing number of organisations seeking to employ Welsh speakers. This pilot event was well received by the students and the staff at the school and will now take place annually in a effort to increase the numbers of Welsh speakers joining the council.

The HR department have recently agreed to enrol all apprentices onto Welsh language courses at Coleg Cambria as part of their training plan and this will be carried forward annually.

8.9 RITA Therapeutic Digital Devices

RITA is an alternative therapeutic intervention. An all-in-one touch Screen solution which offers digital reminiscence therapy which is a relatively new tool in the fields of nursing and healthcare. RITA is aimed at offering support for older people, people with mental health issues, learning disabilities and acute brain injuries as a means of engaging with them and reducing their distress/ agitation, isolation, depression, delirium and behaviours that challenge. The Welsh language officer has worked with the developers 'My Improvement Network' to create a fully bilingual interface so that Welsh speaking patients can benefit from the service in their preferred language.

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 **31/03/2023**

EMPLOYEES WITH WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN 1 OR MORE CATEGORIES - 2022/23

| Grade | No. of Emps. | Level 1 + | % | Level 3 + | % |
|---|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| G02 - G06 | 1721 | 173 | 10.1% | 25 | 1.5% |
| G07 - G10 | 1017 | 218 | 21.4% | 41 | 4.0% |
| G11 - G16 | 182 | 47 | 25.8% | 16 | 8.8% |
| Soulbury, Youth and Centrally employed Teachers | 147 | 27 | 18.4% | 4 | 2.7% |
| Craft Workers | 107 | 2 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Chief Officers / Executive | 8 | 2 | 25.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Grand Total | 3,182 | 469 | 14.7% | 86 | 2.7% |

| Department | No. of Emps. | Level 1 + | % | Level 3 + | % |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Chief Executive Services | 91 | 27 | 29.7% | 6 | 6.6% |
| Education and Early Intervention Service | 338 | 69 | 20.4% | 12 | 3.6% |
| Environment and Technical Services | 454 | 24 | 5.3% | 4 | 0.9% |
| Finance & ICT Department | 173 | 42 | 24.3% | 6 | 3.5% |
| Governance and Customer Services | 94 | 28 | 29.8% | 8 | 8.5% |
| Chief Officers / Executive | 1028 | 116 | 11.3% | 19 | 1.8% |
| Housing | 213 | 45 | 21.1% | 11 | 5.2% |
| Economy & Planning | 791 | 118 | 14.9% | 20 | 2.5% |
| Social Care Services | 791 | 118 | 14.9% | 20 | 2.5% |
| Grand Total | 3,182 | 469 | 14.7% | 86 | 2.7% |