

# Minutes



## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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Date: 24 June 2022

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors P Hourahine (Chair), M Al-Nuaimi, M Evans, L James, B Davies and Horton

In Attendance: Gareth Price (Head of Law and Regulation), Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director), Janice Dent (Policy and Partnership Manager), Hywel Jones (Welsh Language Officer),

Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Advisor), Anne Jenkins (Governance Team Leader), Pamela Tasker (Governance Officer), Emily Mayger (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors C Baker-Westhead and P Bright

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### 1. Apologies

Councillors P Bright and C Baker-Westhead.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

None

### 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting 21 January 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting held 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022 were **accepted as a true and accurate record.**

### 4. Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2021-22

#### Invitees:

Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director – Transformation & Corporate Centre)  
Janice Dent (Policy and Partnership Manager)  
Hywel Jones (Welsh Language Officer)

The Strategic Director presented the report.

The Strategic Director reminded the Committee that this report reflected upon the 2021-22 financial year where Covid restrictions were still in place.

The Strategic Director highlighted that a key pressure for Newport City Council was the recruitment of Welsh speaking employees to deliver services.

## Questions:

A committee member asked what the percentage of the population would need to speak Welsh in Newport would be in relation to the 2050 goal.

- The Strategic Director highlighted 2 measures for this – the first being census data which analysis was not complete for and the second being the number of pupils in Welsh medium education, which was the basis for planning over the next 5 years.
- The Welsh Language Officer confirmed the numbers were largely based on 2011 census data. The Welsh Language Officer informed the committee that the annual monitoring report would work closely with the Strategic Plan. The Welsh Language Officer informed committee that increasing Welsh speakers would require monitoring Welsh medium education and there was a focus on the development of Welsh in communities to increase the use of the Welsh language. The Welsh Language Officer added that there was also training within Newport City Council to increase the numbers of Welsh speaking staff.
- The Strategic Director confirmed that there was no specific percentage target in Newport as Newport City Council were not in a position to do this.
- The committee member noted that the report was acceptable for this year but felt that the 2050 target was ambitious. The committee member suggested that it would be useful to have comments on this target included in the annual report and that it would also be useful for Newport City Council to provide percentages for the number of Welsh speakers within Newport.
- The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed that this would be taken on board and would be included in the report for next year.

A committee member asked what was the target for the level of Welsh fluency.

- The Welsh Language Officer directed committee to the breakdown of fluency within the report's tables. The Welsh Language Officer informed committee that there would be a focus on creating a framework to measure linguistic ability in Welsh to standardise Newport City Council amongst other public bodies.
- The Policy and Partnership Manager highlighted the 2021-22 key achievements and felt that there was lot of progress despite the challenges of the pandemic.
- The Welsh Language Promotion Officer highlighted the work of Education in raising awareness.
- The Welsh Language Officer highlighted the Welsh in the Community Grants and their impact on community groups and the use of Welsh. The Welsh Language Officer highlighted the Many Faces of Welshness campaign.
- The Welsh Language Officer highlighted that the Welsh In Education Strategic Plan, the Promotional plan, and the 5 Year Promotional Policy showed the ongoing work and assured committee that these would be reported on.
- The Welsh Language Officer highlighted the work taking place with refugee, migrant and minority ethnicity groups to increase the use of Welsh in minority communities.

- The Welsh Language Officer noted that they were building on creative partnerships.

A committee member praised the Councillor Evans stated that he was impressed with the production of the Welsh Video circulated to committee but had some issues with its content.

A committee member highlighted that the number of complaints was excellent.

A committee member highlight that no one had opted to undertake training through the medium of Welsh and that it would be useful to standardise the presentation of data throughout the report.

A committee member felt it would be useful to have seen a summary of resident's comments from surveys.

A committee member asked how grant spending was monitored.

- The Strategic Director informed committee that monitoring grant spending was important to ensure that it had the correct impact and correct data was collected. The Strategic Director informed committee that any specific comments relating to the video could be directed to himself and the Monitoring Officer for investigation.
- The Welsh Language Officer assured committee that there was grant instruction, and that grant applications were panel assessed. The Welsh Language Officer assured committee that there was monitoring and follow up processes where receipts and expenditure would be provided by grant recipients.
- The Welsh Language Officer informed committee that the grant funding was used for rent as the recipients did not have a venue of their own so would not have otherwise been able to hold the event.
- The Welsh Language Officer noted that the survey replies were collected as part of the 5 Year Strategy and so were included in the Appendix, but took on board the committees comments.

A committee member felt that the report did not give enough detail or data regarding specific achievements highlighted within the report.

A committee member noted the surplus of Welsh medium nursery placements and felt that this should be investigated.

- The Strategic Director assured committee that more detail would be added to the report on key achievements.
- The Strategic Director informed committee that the surplus of Welsh medium nursey placements would have to be raised with the Chief Education Officer for comment.
- The Strategic Director informed committee that both himself and the Policy and Partnership Manager would look to incorporate the work of the Promotional Officer into this report and subsequent reports.

## **5. Conclusion of Committee Reports**

The committee agreed that it was important to monitor the outcomes of the grants provided to various organisations.

The committee agreed that it would be beneficial to receive an executive summary of responses from any surveys mentioned.

The committee felt that more specific data and detail was required to support key achievements within the report.

The committee requested a comment from the Chief Education Officer regarding the surplus of Welsh Medium Nursery places.

The committee agreed that the report was a fair reflection of what had occurred over the past year.

The committee agreed that the Annual Report highlighted the ongoing commitment to the Welsh Language.

The committee agreed that the comments and recommendations made should be submitted to Cabinet.

## **6. Scrutiny Adviser Report**

### **Actions Received**

The Scrutiny Advisor assured the Committee that a comment would be requested from the Chief Education Officer regarding the surplus of Welsh Medium Nursery places.

The Scrutiny Advisor informed committee that the Digital Services Strategy Report would be on the agenda for the next committee meeting.

The Scrutiny Advisor informed committee that the Draft Annual Forward Work Programme would be discussed at the next committee meeting.

## **7. Date of the Next Meeting**

29th of July 2022 at 10am.