

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 17 July 2019

Subject Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2018-19

Purpose This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2018-19.

The attached monitoring report is required to be published on the council's website in accordance with statutory deadlines.

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Policy, Partnership and Involvement Manager

Ward All

Summary The Council is required to report annually on its progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

This report covers the third year of implementation, following the imposition of the majority of Welsh language standards in March 2016. The report provides Cabinet with an overview of the Council's progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards.

Proposal **To approve the attached final monitoring report and publish it on the Council's website, in accordance with statutory deadlines.**

Action by Head of People and Business Change, Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

Cabinet Member for Equalities and Assets (Deputy Leader)
The Council's Strategic Equalities Group, Welsh Language Implementation Group and
HR Manager, Elected Member Champion for Welsh Language

Signed **Head of People and Business Change**

Background

Legal context

This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2018-19. This represents the Authority's third year of implementing the Welsh Language Standards which came to force on the 30th of March 2016.

Governance and management

The implementation of, and compliance with, Welsh Language Standards is monitored through both the officer Welsh Language Implementation Group and the Strategic Equalities Group, which is chaired by Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Equalities and Assets. The Authority also has an Elected Member Welsh Language Champion. The implementation of the Welsh Language Standards has been identified as a medium risk on the Authority's Risk Register.

Developments

The Welsh Language Standards have provided NCC with the impetus to rise to the Welsh Government's challenge of delivering entirely bilingual public services. This annual report reflects the positive distance travelled by the Authority in reaching this aim, whilst also highlighting the work left to be done.

The Authority has taken a holistic approach to implementing change, allocating responsibility to service areas and putting governance arrangements in place through the Strategic Equalities Group, the Welsh Language Implementation Group and the Authority's newly established programme management portfolio boards which will deliver key Council projects in line with corporate themes.

Newport City Council continues to invest in the Welsh language, with a Welsh language and equalities budget to support internal adoption of standards and facilitate partnership and community initiatives. However, over the past 12 months the Authority has also made number of efficiency savings, including the move to a centralised translation service, which translates a huge volume of material for the Authority. This will result in a spending reduction for 19/20.

As was the case in our previous annual report, and referenced in our official challenges to the Commissioner's Compliance Notice which set out those Standards that we are required to comply with, there remain a number of limitations relating to legacy IT systems that cannot currently comply with Welsh Language Standards. However, as these reach the end of their operational lifespan they will be replaced by systems which will have considered Welsh language requirements at the outset of the procurement process.

Last year the Authority identified a number of priorities that it wanted to achieve in the 18/19 financial year, including a Welsh mystery shopper programme, improved and integrated impact assessment guidance, and the further development of our 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy. This report shows that we have made progress against many of these goals. However, as has been the case in previous financial years, the Authority will need to keep up momentum to ensure consistent implementation of our Welsh language standards.

To ensure this is the case, we have identified a number of actions which will help us keep pace in the 2019/20 financial year:

- Work on developing and promoting the update Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) process
- Greater promotion of the councils Welsh language services
- Development and delivery of suitable Welsh language awareness training across the organisation
- Enhance partnership working across Welsh Language Forum members in line with the Welsh Language Strategy

- Develop the intranet to include Welsh language guidance around compliance with the Welsh Language Standards
- Ensure that older, non-Welsh language compliant programmes, are replaced at the end of their functional life span, with new fully-compliant systems

Financial Summary

The cost of implementing the Welsh Language Scheme is largely met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area. The majority of the actions relate to work already identified in service improvement plans, for example workforce monitoring. In 2018/19 £277k was allocated to deliver Welsh Language Standards, reducing to £229k in 2019/20, with most of that amount earmarked for developing a sustainable translation service.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the Welsh Language (WL) Standards in their entirety are not implemented	H	M	Governance of the WL Scheme / Standards and Equalities is strengthened through the WL Implementation Group and Strategic Equalities Group. Resources have been identified for implementation and translation provision.	Heads of Service Head of People and Business Change
That the Standards are not understood by employees	H	L	The WL internal communications strategy is a visible campaign that engages managers and employees. Training on WL awareness is now delivered by internal officers, helping to facilitate engagement between Welsh language officers and staff.	Head of People and Business Change
That the Council's website is not fully bilingual	M	H	The majority of the Council's website is now compliant with WL Standards, however, the number of associated systems which populate the site remains an ongoing challenge.	Head of People and Business Change Head of Streetscene

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

As detailed in the body of the report, the Council's commitments under the Welsh Language Standards are integrated into the Authority's key strategic documents, including the Strategic Equality Plan, the Wellbeing Plan, and the Authority's most recent Corporate Plan.

Options Available

- a) To approve the attached report and publish on the council's website
- b) To not approve the attached report and redraft.

Preferred Option and Why

Option a) is the preferred option, in order to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial consequences as a result of the proposal to approve the monitoring report and then publish on the Council's website. The actual implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme is met by service area budgets and a central budget is also in place to develop a sustainable translation service with a reserve available to draw on for new standards and requirements which may be identified in the GAP analysis as outlined in the report moving forward.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council has a statutory duty under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 to comply with prescribed Welsh Language Standards in relation to the delivery of public services, policy making and record keeping. The Council is required to report annually on progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards and publish the report in accordance with standard 158. This report sets out the actions taken and the progress made in meeting the Council's Welsh language commitments during 2018/19. It demonstrates that the Council has responded to the requirements of the Measure and the prescribed standards in a systematic way and has actioned some of the major areas of work identified in the 5 year Welsh Language Strategy adopted last year. However, further progress will be required in the next 12 months.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

This annual report reflects the positive progress made and highlights some examples of good practice that we have delivered over the past 12 months. The report also identifies some areas in which we will need to make improvements in the year to come, for example, improving the number of staff undertaking Welsh awareness and language improvement courses.

Continued work on the Welsh Language agenda, and the 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy contributes to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives and the national well-being goals, in particular, working towards a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

Comments of Cabinet Member

I am pleased to see the progress the Authority has made over the past 12 months outlined in this report, and that our Welsh Language Standards are now recognised and understood by the majority of Council staff. Our governance arrangements ensure that we monitor ongoing implementation and progress against our standards, as well as seeking opportunities to effectively promote the Welsh language across the City in partnership with community-based Welsh language groups. As we move into a new year, I look forward to continuing to lead on this work, particularly in light of recent announcements in relation to our plans for an additional Welsh medium school, which I anticipate will provide further opportunity to build on the good work already undertaken.

Sylwadau Aelod Cabinet

Rwy'n falch o weld y cynnydd y mae'r Awdurdod wedi'i wneud dros y 12 mis diwethaf fel yr amlinellir yn yr adroddiad hwn, a bod Safonau'r Gymraeg bellach yn cael eu cydnabod ac yn ddealladwy i ran fwyaf o staff y Cyngor. Mae ein trefniadau llywodraethu yn sicrhau ein bod yn monitro'r gwaith parhaus o weithredu a sicrhau cynnydd yn erbyn ein safonau, yn ogystal â chwilio am gyfleoedd i fwrw ati i hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg ledled y Ddinas mewn partneriaeth â grwpiau Cymraeg cymunedol. A ninnau ar drothwy blwyddyn newydd, edrychaf ymlaen at barhau i arwain y gwaith hwn, yn enwedig yng ngoleuni'r cyhoeddiadau diweddar mewn perthynas â'n cynlluniau ar gyfer ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg ychwanegol, yr wyf yn rhagweld y bydd yn cynnig cyfle pellach i adeiladu ar y gwaith da sydd eisoes wedi'i gyflawni.

Local issues

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

No Fairness & Equalities Impact Assessment (F&EIA) is necessary for the annual report. Equalities and Welsh language agenda are well aligned and actions in the report referring to FEIA in Newport will consider both together.

The Welsh Language Standards are congruent with equalities legislation as outlined in the report

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

No consultation was needed for this report.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015, which came into force in April 2016, places an obligation on Local Authorities to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Welsh Language Annual Report represents much of the work that the Authority undertakes to fulfil our Wellbeing objective to work towards 'a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.

In support of the Act's sustainable development principle, our focus on developing a workforce which has a range of Welsh language abilities across service areas ensures an approach to meeting our Welsh language obligations which looks to the future, alongside continued efforts to promote increased use of Welsh within our local communities. This work is informed and delivered collaboratively with Welsh language community networks, and better integration of Welsh language considerations within our Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment process has improved the way our Welsh language responsibilities and community views impact on our policy and decision making.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Welsh Language Standards (Newport City Council Compliance Notice)

Welsh Language Annual Report 18/19

5 Year Welsh Language Strategy

NCC Well-being Objectives and Well-being Statement

Wellbeing Plan

Dated: 10 June 2019