

Report



Cabinet

Part 1

Date: January 2022

Item No:

Subject Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032

Purpose To seek permission to submit Newport's 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to Welsh Government for approval and subsequent anticipated implementation from September 2022.

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Ward All

Summary The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires local authorities to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and outlines that the Plan must contain:

- A local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh in its area and improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;
- The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;
- Report on the progress made to meet the targets contained in the previous Plan or previous revised Plan.

The Act also requires each local authority to submit its WESP to Welsh Ministers for approval prior to implementation. The WESP has been subject to extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the public, and the final plan must be submitted to Welsh Government by 31st January 2022.

Proposal To consider the feedback received during the formal consultation and approve that the WESP can be submitted to Welsh Government for consideration, with a view to the new Plan being implemented from September 2022.

Action by Chief Education Officer

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Management Team
- Education Senior Management Team
- Senior HR and Finance Business Partners

Signed

Background

Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* requires a local authority to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and outlines that a Plan must contain:

- a. A local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:
 - Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh in its area;
 - Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;
- b. The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area;
- c. The progress made to meet the targets contained in the previous Plan or previous revised Plan.

Cymraeg 2050

Cymraeg 2050 introduces a long-term vision for a Wales where the Welsh language thrives. The strategy aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050 and ensure that the percentage of the population that speaks Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increases from 10% (in 2013–15) to 20% by 2050.

As well as increasing the proportion of learners being taught through the medium of Welsh, Cymraeg 2050 aims to:

- transform how Welsh is taught to all learners to ensure that at least 70% of those learner's report by 2050 that they can speak Welsh by the time they leave school; and
- increase the number of primary teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh from 2,900 to 3,900 by 2031 and 5,200 by 2050;
- increase the number of secondary teachers who can teach Welsh as a language from 500 to 900 in 2031 and 1,200 by 2050; and
- increase the number of secondary teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh from 1,800 to 3,200 by 2031 and 4,200 by 2050.

The WESP must demonstrate how Newport will contribute to achieving this goal.

Newport's 10-Year Vision

The *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019* require Local Authorities to **set a ten-year target** outlining the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh in the local authority's area during the lifespan of a Plan.

In developing the draft WESP, every opportunity was made for Newport's Welsh Education Forum (WEF) members to contribute towards the shaping the Council's ongoing commitment to developing Welsh-medium education across Newport, and meeting the targets set out in Cymraeg 2050. The WEF is key in ensuring that the ambitious targets outlined in this plan can be achieved, and there is a shared ownership amongst the Local Authority and partners therefore around delivery of this plan.

The 10-year target for Newport outlines a minimum 6 percentage point increase in the number of Year 1 learners taught through the medium of Welsh by 2032. This is quantified in the following table (the 2032 target is based on our current pupil cohort):

PLASC Year	Cohort	Percentage of cohort	Number of Year 1 Pupils
2021 Baseline	1988	5.1	101
2032 Target	1988	11.1	221

As of September 2020, there were 112 Year 1 Welsh-medium places available across Newport. The minimum additionality therefore currently equates to 109 pupil places by 2032. 60 of these additional places will eventually be provided through Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Gwenlli which opens in September 2021 and will increase the number of Welsh-medium primary school places available across the City by 54%.

A proposal to create a further 30 Welsh-medium primary school places per year group from September 2026 is currently being considered, with the intention that the remaining shortfall against the minimum target, estimated at a further 30 Year 1 pupil places, will be factored into future discussions regarding new developer-led schools and Band C of the 21st Century Schools programme. These details have not been quantified and will likely emerge in the second half of this WESP period, from 2027 onwards, and will be reflected in the Local Development Plan that will be in place to cover this period.

As a result of this planned expansion in Welsh-medium primary provision by 2032 the Council aims to offer at least 232 Year 1 places across 6 primary school locations, more than doubling the provision that currently exists. This will be supplemented by increased early years and childcare opportunities through the medium of Welsh.

This ambition will also extend into the secondary sector, as the planned significant increase in primary provision will inevitably require a similar increase in secondary provision. This will be considered in the second half of the plan and is included within the Council's intention to review all secondary school provision across the City as part of Band C of the 21st Century Schools Programme. This programme is likely to commence in 2024.

Welsh Government's aspiration and aim to reach a million Welsh speakers; "Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers" is a long-term aim, endorsed and supported by the WESP, the Welsh Language Strategy and partnership working. These efforts must be pulled together to achieve the best possible outcomes for the people of Newport.

The long-term aspiration of the Council is to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Newport, raise awareness, increase the visibility, and promote the economic benefits of the Welsh language across the diverse communities in the city, by increasing opportunities for those with all levels of Welsh to practice and speak Welsh in a safe, friendly, and supportive environment, and engaging with those who might have no awareness of the language. Work with partners on the Right Skills Board will help support the commitment and target to increase awareness of Welsh language as a skill and its value in the workplace and how the Board can support attainment of those targets.

Newport is a Welsh city, with a Welsh identity but with a diverse range of multi-cultural and multilingual communities, and it is important to increase awareness that the Welsh language is one of Wales' treasures. It is something that defines us as a people and is increasingly an integral part of our everyday lives.

Development of the draft WESP

Specific working groups were established early in the summer term 2021 to consider individual outcome areas, with work done to confirm the baseline position and what must be achieved, both within the first 5 years of the plan and at the end of the 10-year period, in order for the Council to meet the overall targets required. These working groups consisted of relevant stakeholders, primarily from within the WEF, and ensured that each outcome area was subject to vigorous scrutiny and that the targets were appropriately ambitious. Following conclusion of these workshops, a first draft WESP was shared with the WEF at a meeting in early July 2021, and this offered an opportunity for all members to challenge the content and offer suggestions as to elements that were missing or needed to be enhanced. The feedback from this meeting was considered by Council officers, and a final draft agreed in early September. This final draft was shared with WEF before a briefing was provided to the Leader, Cabinet Member for Education and Chief Executive, this providing the authority to move forward to a period of formal consultation and stakeholder engagement. In developing the draft WESP for consultation, three versions were created: the full WESP, an executive summary and a shortened version suitable for children and young people.

Consultation and Feedback

Formal consultation commenced on 27th September 2021 and ended at midnight on 22nd November 2021. An invitation to take part in the consultation was issued to a large number of stakeholders by email, with this including a link to the consultation page of the Council's website. A full list of consultees is included within the accompanying Consultation Report.

During the live period, the consultation was regularly publicised through Newport City Council's social media channels. Information was also shared through Newport Matters, the staff newsletter and the Intranet Homepage. Posters were designed and displayed at Newport Central Library, Community Hubs, Flying Start settings and via Early Years and Childcare providers. All settings other than Central Library also displayed QR codes linked to the relevant page of the Council website and were provided with hard copies of the shortened version of the plan. Due to the ongoing public health situation, and in keeping with Welsh Government guidance, there were unfortunately no face-to-face consultation events arranged to support the consultation.

Learner Voice

The Council is committed to gaining the views of learners, and to support this pupil voice sessions were offered to all Newport Secondary schools. This offer was taken up by six of the nine secondary schools across the City. Due to the current public health situation, this was facilitated through *Question-and-Answer* sessions held via Microsoft Teams, rather than face-to-face workshops. The feedback received is included within the accompanying Consultation Report.

Consultation Responses

Overall, a total of 73 responses were received during the consultation period; 63 (86%) were received in English, 9 (13%) were received in Welsh and 1(1%) was received bilingually.

Of this total number, 65 responses were made via the online response pro-forma and there were 8 written responses from groups and individuals including Estyn, the Welsh Language Commissioner, RhAG, PACEY, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Mudiad Meithrin and UCAC.

In total, 32 respondents (equivalent to 44%) supported the draft plan with 41 respondents (56%) indicating that they were not in support. However further analysis of these negative responses suggested that over 50% related to Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy rather than the Council's approach to achieving the prescribed targets.

The written responses were broadly supportive of the draft Plan, with the response from the Welsh Language Commissioner stating that the strategic document was excellent and that the level of detail on specific action points was welcomed. The response from Estyn referenced that the rationale for the proposals was presented appropriately, that a number were ambitious and identified sensible considerations, and that the aspirations and proposals presented as part of the consultation were supported. A summary of the points raised in these submissions, along with the Council's response, is included within the accompanying Consultation Report.

Revisions to the draft WESP

The draft WESP has now been reviewed to take account of the feedback received during the consultation, and as a result minor adjustment has been made to specific target areas. However, the consultation responses suggest that overall, the WESP is considered appropriately robust by key stakeholders. The WESP is split into 7 outcome areas, and a summary of each of these now follows, outlining the baseline (where we are now) position, alongside 5-year and 10-year targets:

Outcome 1: More nursery children learning in Welsh		
Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
5.4% (84)	8.6% (136)	11.1% (175)
----- Maintained nursery children learning in Welsh (excluding Rising 3's)		

We aim to fill the nursery places in our current Welsh-medium schools and create over 100 new places across the city.

Outcome 2: More reception class children learning in Welsh

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
5.7% (113)	8.6% (171)	11.1% (220)
reception class children learning in Welsh		

To achieve this, we aim to create 60 extra reception places in addition to the 60 places being provided at Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Gwenlli.

Outcome 3: More learners improve their Welsh language when moving from primary school to secondary school

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
96%	96%	96%
learners improve their Welsh language when moving from primary school to secondary school		

We want to ensure learners are confident and understand the benefits of choosing Welsh-medium secondary education.

Outcome 4: More learners study for exams in Welsh

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
100% (144)	100% (317)	100% (342)
of learners in Years 10-13 at Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed take an exam in Welsh		
93.6% (1624)	96.2% (1952)	96.3% (1941)
of learners take a GCSE in the subject of Welsh		
144	600	1000
learners study in Welsh and the subject of Welsh at Coleg Gwent (B1)		

We want more secondary school pupils in English-medium schools to take the Welsh as a Second Language GCSE exam and more students at Coleg Gwent to study bilingually.

Outcome 5: More learners use Welsh outside of the school classroom

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
0% (0)	75% (30)	100% (40)
of English-medium primary schools have reached Gold in Cymraeg Campus		

This will help embed Welsh as a living language for our young people.

Outcome 6: An increase in classes for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) learning in Welsh

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
0	10	20
dedicated ALN spaces for pupils learning in Welsh		

The provision of 20 dedicated ALN places in Welsh-medium primary schools aims to bring this provision broadly in-line with the proportion of places in English-medium primary schools.

Outcome 7: More teachers and staff able to teach Welsh and in Welsh

Baseline	5-year target	10-year target
Working to help teachers and staff learn the skills they need for Welsh speaking jobs	Make sure all schools have enough staff able to speak Welsh when needed	Welsh-medium pupils coming back as teachers in Newport Schools
Survey to see who has Welsh language skills in schools	Use the survey results to plan what we need	-
6	12	12
Coleg Gwent staff able to teach fluently in Welsh		

Work in this outcome will include an analysis of the SWAC data at annual reviews of this strategy to forecast staffing needs over future years.

Financial Summary

There are no specific capital or revenue budgets allocated within the Council for delivering the targets outlined within the WESP. Work to deliver the various aspects of the plan encompasses a number of service areas and external partners and stakeholders.

Notwithstanding this, the Education Service has a good record of maximising improvements and expansions to the school estate through the 21st Century Schools Programme, other specific Welsh Government grants and s106 housing develop contributions. This will continue to ensure that the targets within the plan can be achieved within the 10-year timespan. Any capital investment will be included within the Education Capital Programme at the appropriate time.

There continues to be a pressure on revenue budgets, and any expansion in Welsh-medium provision will lead to an increase in whole authority staff costs. Longer term, the Council will need to ensure that any planned expansion in provision is factored into the Medium-Term Financial Plans appropriate at the time. However, this will potentially cause pressures elsewhere across other Council services.

Risks

It is important to identify and manage any project or scheme's exposure to risk and have in place controls to deal with those risks.

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?
Welsh Government do not approve the WESP	H	M	There has been full consultation with a variety of partners and stakeholders, including Welsh Government, and the revised WESP takes account of the feedback received.	Chief Education Officer
The targets within the WESP are not delivered within the 10-year period	H	L	The targets included within the WESP are considered appropriate and are supported by partners within the Welsh in Education Forum (WEF). The annual progress report will measure distance travelled and if appropriate will act as a stimulus for further discussions around adjusted targets.	Chief Education Officer WEF Members
Lack of available land, surplus buildings and capital headroom to support growth	H	L	Welsh-medium provision will be a consideration in all future discussions regarding new developer-led schools and Band C of the 21st Century Schools programme.	Chief Education Officer
Additional provision increases pressure on revenue budgets	H	H	The Council will need to ensure that any planned expansion in provision is factored into the Medium-Term Financial Plans appropriate at the time.	Chief Education Officer Head of Finance

Low take-up of places in Welsh-medium primary schools	H	L	A dedicated Promotion Officer post has recently been filled to look at ways to promote the Welsh language and Welsh-medium education across the City.	Chief Education Officer
Impact of new seedling models adversely affects the availability of primary school places across the City	M	M	The Council's Planning of School Places (POSP) Group will continue to monitor projections to ensure a sufficiency of primary school places across the City.	Chief Education Officer POSP Group
Failure to support any future proposals in relation to dual stream provisions	M	M	Dual-stream provisions already exist in other Council areas and could provide a practical steppingstone to expansion of Welsh-medium provision in Newport.	Chief Education Officer
Lack of appropriate workforce to support expansion in provision	H	H	The Council's Welsh Language Strategy includes a commitment to work with employers, partners, and stakeholders to promote the importance and economic benefits of speaking or learning Welsh, and how this can help and support pupils, students, and individuals to gain employment. In addition, a new working group will conduct a workforce needs analysis for the Welsh-medium education growth model outlined within the 10-year strategic plan.	Chief Education Officer WEF

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
 Corporate Plan
 Council Improvement Plan (*Aspirational People* theme)
 Education Service Plan
 Welsh Language Strategy
 Local Development Plan

Options Available and considered

Option 1: To approve the original draft WESP as consulted upon and submit this to Welsh Government for consideration.

Option 2: To approve the revised WESP, which takes account of feedback received from stakeholders during the period of formal consultation and submit this to Welsh Government for consideration.

Option 3: Not to approve either the draft or revised versions of the WESP for submission to Welsh Government.

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is Option 2. The feedback received during consultation suggests that, subject to minor adjustments to specific target areas which have now actioned, the Council's proposed 10-year WESP is appropriately robust and suitably ambitious and should be submitted to Welsh Government for consideration in terms of assist in meeting its Cymraeg 2050 targets.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. However, the report refers to activities that are either in progress, or planned, with the aim of achieving the objectives of the WESP. In the case of existing activity, any costs associated with this will be funded via existing budgets, or grant allocations, both revenue and capital. Should any future revenue pressures arise from this plan, it will be necessary to factor this into the medium-term budget setting process. As an example, the current medium term financial plan reflects the necessary budget provision to provide the primary and secondary Welsh medium capacity outlined in this report. In the case of capital, the current programme contains the Council's share of the existing 21st Century Schools Programme, part of which is focussed on delivering Welsh medium capacity. The Council will shortly commence the development of its new 5-year Capital Programme and any need for further capital investment will need to form part of that planning and prioritisation process.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP), setting out the corporate vision for the development of Welsh language education in Newport, in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and relevant Welsh Government guidance. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 require the Council include within the WESP to its 10-year vision and targets for meeting the objectives of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Plan. The proposed WESP has been the subject of extensive consultation with key stakeholders and revised, where appropriate, in the light of the consultation responses. The impact of the WESP in relation to the Council's public sector equality and socio-economic duties under the Equality Act have been assessed in the attached FEIA. Cabinet is now required to approve the draft WESP for submission to Welsh Government, to enable the final WESP to be implemented by September 2022.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

Colleagues across the council have collaborated to ensure the WESP is cognisant of other areas of work and can be supported across all its functions. This will also ensure that other council policies, strategies and work streams will reflect, align, and support the key outcomes and targets in the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy.

The WESP has been through a full, inclusive consultation process including staff and trade unions who have been given the opportunity to provide responses. There has been a positive response to the consultation which included several workshops aligned to Welsh Government outcomes, and ensured appropriate data, targets and responses contributed to the WESP.

One of the key outcomes of the plan, relating to staffing, is to increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh. The Council's Welsh Language Skills Policy makes a commitment to promote the organisation as a workplace that is supportive of the Welsh language with a view to building on the Welsh language skills of the workforce and to attract more Welsh speaking staff which, in turn, supports the proposed staffing outcomes of the WESP.

Scrutiny Committees

None

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

• Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act puts in place a sustainable development principle which helps organisations consider the impact they could have on people living in Wales in the future, and ensure they are focused on tackling long-term challenges.

Long-term - The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs - The plan covers a span of 10 years. It provides specific focus and targets across 7 outcome areas taking in to account the current situation looking ahead to targets and outcomes at 5 years and 10 years down the line. The plan will continue to support the Welsh Government vision of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Cymraeg 2050).

Prevention - Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse - The progress of the plan will be subject to annual reviews. This will ensure a clear pathway towards the end of the plan and further. The review will ensure development of mitigations to avoid moving off targets further down the line. Implementation of the WESP will help ensure sufficiency of provision to enable growth.

Integration - Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies - The plan will have a positive impact on the well-being goals for Wales and Newport's wellbeing objectives. The plan will ensure a prosperous Wales where there will development of a bilingually educated population which will lead to employment opportunities allowing people to prosper through work. The plan will ensure a more equal Wales, allowing families from any background have increasing opportunities through a choice of language in their child's education. By expanding the provision of Welsh-medium education in a number of communities in the plan, communities will become connected through their education choices. The plan will promote and protect Welsh culture and heritage as well as the Welsh language, this will encourage people to participate in the Welsh traditions such as the arts, sports and recreation. The plan takes responsibility in improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales which in turn will have a positive contribution to global well-being.

Collaboration - Working together to deliver objectives - Partnership with key stakeholders is critical to the successful delivery of the WESP. The Welsh in Education Forum in Newport is a requirement but member's feedback on the WESP has been critical in shaping it. These partners will also ensure that the objectives set out in the WESP are delivered.

Involvement - Involving those with an interest and seeking their view - ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area - Meetings with the WEF are held termly and are chaired by the Chief Education Officer. Members of the WEF are also involved, day to day in delivering the objectives set out in the WESP. The period of consultation and engagement before the WESP is adopted provides an opportunity for the wider community to be involved in the process.

• Equality Act 2010

Protected Characteristics are defined under the Equality Act 2010 and describe groups of people who are protected from discrimination, either in the workplace, or through the provision of goods and services. The council must consider how decisions may impact on people differently because of a protected characteristic, and how any negative impact could be reduced. There are not considered to be any negative impacts arising in relation to any Protected Characteristics with regard to this WESP.

• Socio-economic Duty

The plan is anticipated to reduce inequalities of outcome for several groups that are likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage against a number of areas. As an 'Education' plan, it will reduce potential inequalities of outcome in education by increasing choice and improving standards. This will positively impact on wellbeing goals a prosperous Wales and a more equal Wales and the wellbeing objective to improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities. The plan will reduce potential inequalities of outcome in participation by increasing choice and providing more local opportunities to learn and engage using the Welsh language. This will positively impact on wellbeing goals a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language and a Wales of cohesive communities and wellbeing objectives to improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities and to build cohesive and sustainable communities. The plan will reduce potential inequalities of outcome in living standards by encouraging a thriving community of Welsh speakers.

This will positively impact on wellbeing goals and a Wales of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language and wellbeing objectives to enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient. The plan will reduce potential inequalities of outcome in work by equipping the next generation with bilingual skills to improve job opportunities in the public sector. This will positively impact on wellbeing goals a prosperous Wales and a more equal Wales and wellbeing objectives to improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities and to promote economic growth and regeneration while protecting the environment.

• **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

The plan has a direct positive impact on the Welsh-language. The WESP commits to increasing the number of pupils in Welsh-medium education in Newport. This will be measured overall by year 1 learners. The plan aims to increase the number of year 1 learners by 6 percentage points. The WESP commits to positively impact the Welsh language across 7 outcomes by:

- Increasing the number of 3-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh
- Increasing the number of 5-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh
- Increasing the number of children continuing to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
- Increasing the number of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
- Increasing the number of opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school
- Increasing in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs
- Increasing the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teaching through the medium of Welsh

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable

Consultation

The draft WESP has been subject to a full programme of stakeholder engagement as outlined in attached consultation report.

Background Papers

Consultation Report
Revised WESP
Updated FEIA

Dated: January 2022