

Report

Newport City Council



Part 1

Date: July 2016

Item No:

Subject Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2015-16

Purpose This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2015-2016.

To approve the attached monitoring report to be published on the council's website.

Author Llio Elgar, Corporate Policy and Diversity Officer

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 is a short report which includes information for the period in which the Welsh Language Standards were in place (the 30th and 31st of March 2016) and in general for the year leading up. The council engaged with the Welsh Language Commissioner over their allocation of Standards and has systematically addressed all the Standards with which we are expected to comply.

The Cabinet considered this report on Mon 6th June 2016 and recommended adoption of the proposal to Council

Proposal To approve the attached report and publish it on the council's website in accordance with statutory deadlines.

Action by Corporate Management Team

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Directors
- Heads of Service
- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Signed Rhys Cornwall, Head of People and Business Change

Background

This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2015-2016.

This year has been a year of transition from implementing the Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act 1993 to implementing the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The first Welsh Language Standards implementation date was the 30th of March 2016. As such this report officially covers the first two days of implementing the Standards (the 30th and 31st of March 2016).

The report presents data on the required indicators in the following fields in compliance with Standards 158, 164 and 170: complaints, staff language skills, Welsh medium training for staff and recruiting to empty posts (page 3). This report will be published by 30th June in compliance with Standard 158.

The implementation of the Welsh Language Standards has been on the council's Risk Register for two years. The Standards require change across the whole council in order to offer and promote Welsh language services from the first point of contact. To address the risk we have planned for and implemented the Standards in a systematic way. A Welsh Language Implementation Group reports to the Strategic Equality Group, chaired by Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources. As such progress is reported and monitored by the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet.

Next year we will present a more detailed analysis of progress and remaining risks. The report notes that we have challenged some of the Standards during the consultation process and have challenged further Standards in advance of their implementation date of 30th March 2016. Many of these challenges, if accepted, would ensure greater consistency across the Standards and between the regional local authorities. Our challenges have all been accepted as valid for consideration; however we are awaiting the outcome of the challenge.

Looking forward, the 6 months leading to the second Welsh Language Standards implementation date of 30th September 2016 will involve further challenges. Some of the challenges for the council in the coming year include:

- Developing a bilingual website for the council
- Developing a 5 year Strategy to promote the Welsh language
- Developing a sustainable translation service

Furthermore we need to develop monitoring systems to ensure that the procedures that we have put in place facilitate the intended outcome: greater use of the Welsh language.

Financial Summary

The cost of implementing the Welsh Language Scheme is met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area. The majority of the actions relate to work already identified in the Service Improvement Plans, for example workforce monitoring. An additional £280,000 has been put into 2016/17 base budgets to deliver the Welsh Language Standards, with most of that amount earmarked for developing a sustainable translation service. Service Areas will need to continue to ensure sufficient resource is allocated to meeting the requirements for service provision.

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 Standards in their entirety are not implemented	H	L	Governance of the WL Scheme / Standards and Equalities is strengthened through the Strategic Equalities Group. Service Areas are all engaged through the WL Implementation Group and governance and monitoring is through the Strategic Equality Group.	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 highly visible campaign that engages managers and employees. Service areas have established bilingualism as the new norm so it becomes more difficult not to comply. Training on WL awareness is mandatory for managers	Head of People and Business Change
The website needs to be bilingual and fully functional by 30 th September 2016	H	M	Parts of the website area already operational in Welsh. We have a very short timescale in which to translate and input all webpages and issues remain with back office response to WL requests.	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 planning documents including the Strategic Equality Plan, the Improvement Plan and in the work emerging from the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Options Available

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

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 further financial consequences arising from this report in relation to existing plans and strategies but Cabinet will be aware that additional funding has already been put into budgets for the new standards and requirements.

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. This has been reinforced by a Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The report sets out the action taken to comply with this duty and the progress, to date, in implementing the relevant standards. It demonstrates that the Council has addressed the requirements of the Compliance Notice in a systematic way prior to the first implementation date of 30th March 2016, but further progress will be required in the next 12 months. The Council is required to report annually on progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards and publish the report in accordance with standard 158.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

Comments included within the report.

Comments of Cabinet Member

Implementation of the Welsh Language Standards is a significant challenge for the Local Authority and I am pleased with the progress being made to date. Whilst we recognise the further work required I want to acknowledge the distance travelled by the Council and this annual report clearly evidences this and our ongoing commitments.

Local issues

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable.

Equalities Impact Assessment

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 F&EIA in Newport will consider both together.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

No consultation was needed for this report.

Dated:

Newport City Council Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2015-2016

This report reflects Newport City Council's progress on its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2015-2016. The Head of People and Business Change leads on Welsh language for the authority and this annual report has had the approval of Cabinet.

The report presents data on the required indicators in the following fields in compliance with Standards 158,164 and 170: complaints, staff language skills, Welsh medium training for staff and recruiting to empty posts (page 3). This report will be published by 30th June in compliance with Standard 158. Next year we will present a more detailed analysis of progress and effect.

Legislative requirements

This year has been a year of transition from implementing the Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act 1993 to implementing the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The first Welsh Language Standards implementation date was the 30th March 2016. As such this report officially covers the first two days of implementing the Standards (the 30th and 31st of March 2016).

The Strategic Equalities Plan was reviewed in February 2015 (as required by the Equality Act 2010) and now includes the Welsh language. We consulted on new equality objectives for the council and have nine Equality Objectives. Presented under the wellbeing goal heading of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language' we have the following Welsh language objective:

8 Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

We will promote our bilingual public services and increase the use of Welsh in Newport

The council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) was developed by members of the Newport Welsh Education Forum. Following an annual review in December 2015 and Welsh Education Unit intervention there is a May 2016 update. The Newport WEF will be revising their autumn programme targets and measures in the coming months.

Corporate approach

In September 2014's NCC Corporate Risk Management Strategy and Register's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards was considered a high risk with a pre mitigation score of 25/25 and post mitigation risk score of 16. By March 2016 implementing the Standards remains in RISK 1: Legislative Requirements in the Risk Register, alongside the Social Services Act and Future Generations. Both probability and impact of non-compliance were high.

We have taken a whole authority approach to implementing change, allocating responsibility to the service areas and putting governance arrangements in place through the Welsh Language Implementation Group and Strategic Equality Group. The WL Implementation Group is chaired by the Head of People and Business Change and the SEG is chaired by Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources. As such they report to the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet.

Managing change

In terms of changing functions and systems, and changing hearts and minds we have come a long way. The challenge for the coming year is to monitor our progress in service delivery and monitor the public's access and take up of services.

We are pleased that all service areas & stakeholders are engaged through our internal communications strategy. With the council's newspaper Newport Matters going out bilingually for the first time in May 2015 we have a platform from which to promote our Welsh language corporate identity and services to the public.

Timetable of key Welsh Language Standards dates 2015-2016

Date	Action
March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation agreement set up with Caerphilly Council to ensure a service paid for corporately and free for all NCC service areas
June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation draft of NCC's Compliance Notice received from Welsh Language Commissioner
July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCC responds to the Draft Welsh Language Standards, objecting to some 15 Standards and other related Standards
August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Meeting of the Welsh Language Implementation Group's monthly meetings (a sub group of the Strategic Equality Group) • All Standards have been assigned lead officers
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCC's Compliance Notice received • The compliance notice for Newport City Council states that we have to meet 143 standards within six months and 26 standards within one year. It is comparable with those issued to the other South East Wales Local Authorities.
Sept 2015- March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Services Areas are represented and engaged through the Welsh Language Implementation Group • Newport Norse and Newport LIVE are engaged through the WL Group • Service Areas complete WL Standards Action Plans • Service Areas complete Action Plans for the Standards on which they lead • Budget allocated within the overall budget to make provision for Welsh Language (£280k). • Communication Strategy developed to inform employees, Members and the public's awareness of roles and responsibilities. Strategy includes briefings, Newport Matters articles, a corporate promotional video, posters, desktop image, post cards, tens signs with bilingual greetings, guidance documents on service delivery, intranet pages on the Standards, etc.
March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member approves list of 30 challenges to future standards for presentation to the Welsh Language Commissioner • Welsh Language Commissioner accepts challenges as valid for consideration and thus those Standards are put on hold
March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation date for the majority of the Standards • Audit of service area compliance as at 30 March 2016

Data required each year from 1 April – 31 March from March 2016

- **Information on complaints (*Standard 158(2); 164(2); 170(2)(d)*)**
- **Information on staff language skills (*Standard 170(2)(a)*)**
- **Welsh medium training for staff (*Standard 170 (2)(b+c)*)**
- **Recruiting to empty posts (*Standard 154, 170(ch)*).**

Information on complaints (*Standard 158(2); 164(2); 170(2)(d)*)

No complaints were received on either the 30th or 31st March 2016

The following complaints were received 2015-2016:

- 1) Continuation of a complaint from member of the public (Jan 2015)
Complaint about public noticeboards and parking permits
Welsh Language Commissioner is satisfied with our response – May 2015
- 2) Complaint from member of the public (May 2015)
Dog waste stickers
Employee awareness WL
Compliance with the Standards
Polling card
One million Welsh speakers
Llyfrgell Rogerstone Library
Llanwern GWR sign
- 3) Complaint from Welsh Language Commissioner (May 2015)
English only signs Civic Centre
English only council headed paper
Led to Section 17 Investigation 28th July 2015. Result – Newport NORSE have amended their corporate identity to be fully bilingual and as of 15th March 2016 the WLC will not be making any further recommendations
- 4) Complaint from member of the public (July 2015)
Invoice is in English only
Invoice supplied in Welsh
- 5) Complaint from member of the public (Aug 2015)
Complaint about council phone messages being in Welsh
- 6) Member of the Public
Errors in Newport Matters' Welsh language article

Information on staff language skills (*Standard 170(2)(a)*)

In February and March 2016 we asked employees to update information on their Welsh language skills on the Employee Self Service system. We also asked employees about their language preference, in line with the Operational Standards.

At 31/3/2016 we had 6,183 employees and information on the Welsh language speaking skills of 68%. This is an improvement on the previous year when we had data on 61% of the 6,651 employees.

Welsh Language Skills of Employees as at 31/03/16

Welsh Competency (NCC)	Total	None	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Welsh Language – Reading	4,202	2,745	1,088	200	169
Welsh Language – Spoken Response rate 4,181/6,183=68%	4,181	2,540	1,274	200	167
Welsh Language – Understand	4,185	2,564	1,230	217	174
Welsh Language – Written	4,168	2,787	1,040	187	154

Welsh Language Skills of Employees as at 31/03/15 (for comparison)

Welsh Language – Spoken	Skill level	Percentage %	Numbers
Newport City Council Response rate 4,038/ 6,651=61%	None	63.32%	2,557
	Beginner	27.54%	1,112
	Intermediate	4.80%	194
	Advanced	4.33%	175
	TOTAL	100.00%	4,038

Welsh language spoken skill by service area at 31st March 2016.

		0. None		1. Beginner		2. Intermediate		3. Advanced	Total
Adult & Community Services	88.0%	264	9.3%	28	1.0%	3	1.7%	5	300
Children and Young People Services	80.0%	211	15.5%	41	2.3%	6	2.3%	6	264
Education	69.0%	132	25.1%	48	2.6%	5	3.1%	6	191
Finance	79.5%	62	19.2%	15	0.0%	0	1.3%	1	78
Law & Regulation	80.0%	162	16.3%	33	1.5%	3	2.5%	5	203
People & Business Change	78.7%	96	16.4%	20	1.6%	2	3.3%	4	122
Regeneration Investment & Housing	58.4%	253	32.8%	142	4.8%	21	3.9%	17	433
Schools	48.1%	1121	40.0%	932	6.7%	157	5.2%	121	2331
Strategic Directors	66.7%	2	33.3%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	3
Streetscene & City Services	90.0%	258	7.3%	21	1.7%	5	1.4%	4	288
Grand Total		2561		1281		202		169	4213

Welsh medium training for staff (Standard 170 (2)(b+c))

No Welsh medium training was provided on either the 30th or 31st March 2016.

We contacted all members of staff to ask them to tell us whether they want any of the following in Welsh: recruitment, performance management, disciplinary and grievance, corporate induction and health and safety. Employees can update their own details on the Employee Self Service system. Having been contacted in February and March some 9 individuals stated that they wanted some or all in Welsh, see table below.

Payroll Number	Full Name	Recruitment	Performance Management	Disciplinary and Grievance	Corporate Induction	Health and Safety
X	X	Y				
X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
X	X			Y		
X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
X	X					Y
X	X	Y				
X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
X	x		Y			Y

In 2015-16, 50 people attended the Welsh at Work 3 hour taster session and 145 people attended the half day Welsh Language Awareness Training. The Awareness training has been made mandatory for managers.

Welsh language taster sessions and awareness sessions 2015-2016

Date of training course	Jul '15	Oct '15	Nov '15	Dec '15	Dec '15	Feb '16	Feb '16	Feb '16	Mar '16	Mar '16	Total
Course Title											
Welsh at Work (Taster)		13			15		14			8	50
Welsh Language Awareness	21		20	25		26		28	25		145
											195

Recruiting to empty posts (*Standard 154, 170(ch)*).

Newport City Council did not advertise any posts on either the 30th or 31st March 2016. Job application processes have been amended to be fully accessible in Welsh in accordance with the Standards.