

Report

Cabinet

Part 1

Date: October 2016

Item No:

Subject **Welsh Language Strategy**

Purpose To agree a draft 5 year Welsh Language strategy for Newport for consultation, as required by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards.

Author Head of People and Business Change
Corporate Policy and Diversity Officer

Ward All

Summary In accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 the Council is required to produce, and publish on our website, a 5-year strategy that sets out proposals to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in the area.

The draft strategy is attached to this report. The strategy will be further developed through consultation with our partners and the community.

Proposal **To approve the attached draft strategy for consultation and publish it on the council's website in accordance with statutory deadlines.**

Action by Head of People and Business Change

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Directors
- Heads of Service
- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
- Welsh language implementation group
- Members of the Newport Welsh Education Forum
- Existing stakeholders in the Welsh language community

Signed

Background

This year has been a year of transition from implementing Welsh language requirements under the Welsh Language Act 1993 to implementing the Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Cabinet received a report on the progress in the last year in June.

This report considers the requirement in the standards to develop a five year strategy to promote Welsh language in the area and publish this on the Council's website by 30th September. The Standards also require the development of monitoring and reporting systems to ensure that the procedures that we have put in place facilitate the intended outcome: greater use of the Welsh language.

The Standards that NCC relating to the strategy as follows:

Standard 145 (Promotion)

You must produce, and publish on your website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters)

- (a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5 year period concerned, and*
- (b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).*

Standard 146 (Promotion)

Five years after publishing a strategy in accordance with standard 145 you must:

- (a) assess to what extent you have followed that strategy and have reached the target set by it, and*
- (b) publish that assessment on your website, ensuring that it contains the following information –*
 - (i) the number of Welsh speakers in your area, and the age of those speakers;*
 - (ii) a list of the activities that you have arranged or funded during the previous 5 years in order to promote the use of the Welsh language.*

Draft 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy for Newport

This strategy is Newport City Council's responsibility, however many other organisations and people are active in using and promoting the Welsh language in Newport and our role is to pull these efforts together so that we have the best possible outcomes for the people of Newport. Engaging people is key to the success of this strategy, both in terms of forming and delivering a Welsh language vision for Newport.

The promotion of the Welsh language is a long term aim. We will set a 5 year target such as increasing the number of children attending Welsh medium education, however some of the longer term goals of maintaining people's opportunities to use Welsh throughout their lives, will not be realised over the next 5 years alone.

This strategy is not only about increasing the amount of Welsh speakers in Newport. This strategy is about inspiring and supporting Welsh learners and everybody who is on the continuum of speaking Welsh, from those who can say 'bore da' to those who are Welsh language poets. We want to foster a Newport identity which loves the Welsh language.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is about improving the social, environment, economic and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It makes sustainable development the central organising principle in Welsh public life. The Act has 7 wellbeing goals, one of which is 'A Wales of vibrant cultures and thriving Welsh language.' This means that there is already a duty on the council to achieve that goal in the long term, as one of the steps to create the Wales we want to see in 2050. This strategy and objectives will be considered in forming Newport City Council's Wellbeing Objectives for March 2017 and the Public Service Board's Plan, March 2018.

This strategy will be revised regularly to reflect progress and to respond to the national Welsh language agenda. The council is in the early days of implementing the Welsh Language Standards and we will be learning about promoting the Welsh language and what works as we progress. Any changes that we make to the strategy will have appropriate governance and community involvement.

We have identified 3 Welsh language priorities, under which we will have a number of Welsh language Objectives. Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards is already integrated in the council's equality work, as one of the 9 Equality Objectives.

Our draft vision

'the people of Newport can use Welsh in all parts of life...'

Proposed 5 year target for increasing or maintaining the percentage of Welsh speakers

To increase the number of Newport pupils in Welsh medium education from 892 in 2016/17, to 1,250 or more in 2022/23.

This represents a growth from 3.9% of the school age population to 5%. The target is based on filling the reception classes of the 3 Welsh medium primary schools to their capacity of 107 places a year, for the next 5 years beginning in 2017/2018.

Further work will be required in the city to increase the number of Welsh speakers in line with national targets. The target setting requirement poses a challenge for Newport as Census figures may overstate the numbers of Welsh speakers, and furthermore, we do not have census figures at the beginning and end of the term of the Strategy (2017-2022). Because of this we propose to set a target of growth in children and young people attending Welsh medium education. This is measurable and attainable. During consultation we may have to consider whether this target is challenging enough.

NCC will be consulting on this 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy for Newport for two months. This is timely because it is in the same period as we consult on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for Newport, and the Welsh Government is consulting on their Welsh Government Draft Strategy – 1 Million Welsh Speakers by 2050. The Strategy sets out how we are going to 'to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language.'

During the consultation period we will be engaging with people across Newport, with our partners, local and national organisations and council Members. The final Strategy will be taken to full Council for approval.

Monitoring

Certain governance arrangements are already in place for implementing the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (the WESP) through the Newport Welsh Education Forum and for implementing the Welsh Language Standards. Governance arrangements will be put in place for this Strategy for an initial period, which will also link to strategic equalities objectives.

We will review these arrangements to mainstream them within the governance arrangements for the council's Wellbeing Objectives in 2017, and the Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan in 2018.

A full review will be required after five years in line with the statutory requirements.

Financial Summary

The cost of implementing Welsh language requirements is largely met out of existing budgets by each relevant service area or other public sector organisations. An additional £280,000 was put into the 2016/17 base budgets to deliver the Welsh Language Standards, currently allocated to translation and support services, further monitoring will be required to determine the ongoing requirement. There is also a reserve set aside for the initial and one-off implementation costs for Welsh language standards and the development and promotion of the Strategy, this will be closely monitored.

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 Council is not compliant with the Welsh Language Standards in publishing the 5 year strategy.	H	L	Governance of the WL Scheme / Standards and Equalities is strengthened through the Strategic Equalities Group and annual report to Cabinet. This report proposes a draft strategy which can be further updated following consultation.	Head of People and Business Change
That the proposals in the strategy are not delivered.	M	L	Monitoring arrangements to be put in place, for further report to Cabinet. Work with partners will be developed to support the strategy.	Head of People and Business Change

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

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

The options available are:

1. To agree and publish the draft strategy for consultation.
2. To amend the draft strategy and publish for consultation.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1 is the preferred option – to agree and publish the draft strategy for consultation, and monitor progress as part of the annual monitoring process.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

As highlighted in the financial summary there were additional resources provided to deliver the Welsh Language Standards in the 2016/17 budget. There is also a £240k earmarked reserve to fund the early implementation and one-off costs of the standard.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council has a statutory duty in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards to produce, and publish, a 5-year strategy that sets out proposals to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in the area. The strategy must include targets for increasing or maintaining the numbers of Welsh speakers in the area and the delivery of the strategy must be kept under review. This is also consistent with the well-being goals and the sustainability objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The proposed strategy meets the requirements of the Standards and focuses, in particular, on Welsh language education, building on the existing principles of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This development of the Welsh Language Strategy for the City sets the strategic direction for the next 5 years. This report sets out the draft objectives for cabinet prior to consultation and builds on existing work to develop Welsh language as evidenced in the annual reports. Development of Welsh language also forms part of our corporate and equalities priorities, and is a key element of the wellbeing objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Comments of Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

The strategy sets the vision for the city for development of the Welsh language for the next five years. The target reflects the current work to develop and support Welsh medium education in the city and the draft strategy provides a good starting point to consult on further promotion of Welsh language in the future.

Comments of Cabinet Member for Education and Young People

The Cabinet Member fully endorses this Welsh language strategy which is aligned to the Welsh education strategic plan.

Local issues

No impact on individual wards.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The proposal does not require a Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Not applicable.

Consultation

As outlined in the report.

Background Papers

Welsh Language annual reports.
Welsh Language Standards
Welsh Education Strategic Plan 2016

Dated: 29th September 2016