

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: March 2017

Item No: see above

Subject: 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy for Newport

Purpose: To agree a 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy for Newport, 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 strategy is attached to this report. The strategy was developed through active consultation with our partners and the community.

Proposal: To approve the attached strategy and present it to Council before publishing it on the council's website in accordance with statutory requirements.

Action by: Head of People and Business Change

Timetable: Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Directors
- Heads of Service
- Members
- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
- The council's Welsh Language Implementation Group
- Members of the Newport Welsh Education Forum (WESP)
- Existing stakeholders in the Welsh language community

Signed:

Background

The last year and a half (from September 2015) has been a time 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.

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. Cabinet previously approved a draft Strategy in October 2016 for consultation. If approved by Cabinet, the strategy will be considered by Council. We will put monitoring and reporting systems in place to ensure that this strategy does in fact 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.*

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 Welsh language is one of Wales' treasures. It is part of that which defines us as a people, and is increasingly an integral part of our everyday lives. The Welsh Government (WG) launched their strategy in 2016 for 'A Million Welsh Speakers by 2050.' Newport City Council's Strategy will aim to support the Welsh Government's target for growth by setting our own target for Welsh speakers and own vision for the Welsh language in Newport.

The promotion of the Welsh language is a long term aim. The council has set a 5 year target for increasing the number of children attending Welsh medium education. However we also recognise that a comprehensive strategy also needs to increase everybody's opportunities to use Welsh in Newport. As such this strategy is not only about increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Newport. It is also 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 where people love the Welsh language and feel confident in using it in all parts of life.

The Council is subject to the Welsh Language Standards: we promote ourselves as a bilingual organisation, offering bilingual services. The Wellbeing of Future Generations places sustainable development the central organising principle in Welsh public life. One of the act's 7 wellbeing goals is 'A Wales of vibrant cultures and thriving Welsh language.' This means that there is already a duty on the council to achieve this goal in the long term. This strategy and objectives will be considered in forming Newport City Council's Wellbeing Objectives for March 2017 and the Public Service Board's Wellbeing Plan, March 2018.

The council is in the early days of promoting the Welsh language and working in partnership to promote the Welsh language. This strategy will be revised annually to reflect progress and to respond to the national Welsh language agenda. Any changes that we make to the strategy will have appropriate governance and community involvement.

We have identified a vision, a target for increasing the number of Welsh speakers, 3 Welsh language themes, and a number of Welsh language objectives and actions detailing the steps we will take to achieve the objectives.

Our vision

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

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 4.0% 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.

Welsh Language Strategy Themes and Objectives

The themes and objectives will support us in not only meeting our target of increasing the number of pupils in Newport engaged in Welsh medium education, but will help us support the use of Welsh within the city itself. They are:

1. Increase the numbers of Welsh speakers
2. Council Policy and Workforce Planning
3. Promote Welsh in all parts of life

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.

Consultation

NCC consulted on this 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy for two months, starting early December and ending late January. This consultation process happened concurrently with the consultation for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for Newport, and the Welsh Government's consultation 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 engaged with the people of Newport via our online consultation where we received 100 responses, with the main local stakeholders like Menter Iaith and the Welsh Language Forum, and held a number of meetings with council Members.

The draft strategy attracted a wide range of comments which have been considered in the final Strategy attached to this report. Three main themes emerged from the consultation process, some respondents suggested that we were not going far enough to promote growth in the Welsh language, and we should have set ourselves a more demanding target for growth. The more negative comments focused on fears that the development of Welsh in Newport would be to the detriment of English speakers and/or that Welsh should not be a priority at a time of economic austerity.

There was broad agreement from all respondents that the strategy should have a more community focus, and not just focus on the numerical targets. As a result of this feedback the final strategy has placed greater emphasis on Welsh in the community through theme 2 and 3 of the strategy.

"If Newport is the Gateway to Wales couldn't it also be the Gateway to Welsh?!"

Quote from NCC Member

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 recommend the strategy to Council.
2. To amend the strategy and recommend to Council.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1 is the preferred option – to agree the draft strategy and recommend to Council, 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 and this continues in 2017/18. 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.

The draft Strategy has been subject to consultation and the responses were broadly supportive but, where appropriate, minor changes have been made to reflect the comments received and, in particular, to make the strategy more community focussed.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This development of the Welsh Language Strategy for the City which has been informed by the recent consultation sets the strategic direction for the next 5 years. The strategy sets out the draft objectives for cabinet building 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 provides a good framework for developing the use of Welsh language in Newport.

Comments of Cabinet Member for Education and Young People

The Cabinet Member 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

Comments received from wider consultation have been incorporated into the strategy.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The strategy supports the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 through the positive steps it takes to secure “a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language” one of the Wellbeing Objectives contain within the act.

Background Papers

Newport City Council 5 Year Welsh Language Draft Strategy 2017–2022

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/DRAFT-Five-Year-Welsh-Language-Strategy-2017-2022.pdf>

Newport City Council: Compliance Notice Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

[http://www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru/English/Publications%20List/20160920%20Hysbysiad%20Cydydffurfio44%20Cynqor%20Dinas%20Casnewydd%20\(en\).pdf](http://www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru/English/Publications%20List/20160920%20Hysbysiad%20Cydydffurfio44%20Cynqor%20Dinas%20Casnewydd%20(en).pdf)

Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2015-16

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Council-and-Democracy/Equalities-and-Welsh-language-/Annual-Welsh-Language-Monitoring-Report-2015-2016-Report-to-CM.pdf>

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017–2020 <http://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Schools-and-Education/Welsh-in-Edication/WESP-Welsh-in-Education-Strategic-Plan-2017.pdf>

Dated: 27th February 2017