



Vale of Glamorgan Council
Cyngor Bro Morgannwg

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Monitoring Report

2020-2021



1. Introduction

The Council is committed to the provision of an excellent service to Welsh speakers.

During 2015 we were issued with a legal Compliance Notice by the Welsh Commissioner specifying which Standards apply to the Council.

In order to achieve the 174 standards within the notice the Council developed a comprehensive Action Plan which is published on our website. Progress is monitored on a regular basis and a summary is included within this report.

We also published a 5-year Promotion Strategy as part of the compliance process which is widely available in hard copy as well as on our website. The strategy will be reviewed at the end of 2021 and a new one will be produced to cover the 2022-27 period.

2. Main achievements 2020/2021

- **Website**

During 2020/21 the Council continued to review the content of its website. We have now devised a system which will generate reports and identify any pages where the English and Welsh content does not match. This will allow us to undertake an audit of the website annually to ensure that the content is fully bilingual. Progress continues to be made with the Digital Strategy and the procurement of third- party applications in both Welsh and English.

- **Social Media Accounts**

The Council's main social media accounts have always been bilingual but following an enquiry from a member of the public in September 2019, guidance was issued to

ensure that all 40 Twitter accounts and 26 Facebook accounts are fully bilingual as well as any Instagram accounts.

- **Internal Communications**

Immediately prior the pandemic, Staffnet was made available to staff to access information on internal news items, their payslips and some policies on any device. This has been extremely well used and is available bilingually. We now send all staff a round-up of the week's news from the Managing Director at the end of every week and this is also sent in Welsh and English.

- **Contact Centre and Main Reception Areas**

The Council continues to offer all callers an option to undertake their enquiries through the medium of Welsh. The total number of callers who used this option during 2020/21 was 1013 (2019/20 678). Calls through the medium of Welsh have shown an increase during the period compared to an overall reduction in English language calls. During the period the Council also supported the Transport for Wales on demand bus service, Fflecsi, answering an additional 411 enquiries through the medium of Welsh for this service.

The Council continues to implement its digital strategy, offering an increasing number of self-service options via its website. During the period the council introduced Chatbot and Webchat options via its website. These services are and continue to be offered in both Welsh and English. During the period from May 2020 to 31 March 2021 454 Webchat enquiries were handled through the medium of Welsh. This compares to 4,324 English language enquires.

On average callers using the Welsh language option in 2020/21 waited for 169 seconds (2019/20: 172) to have their call answered while callers using the English language option waited for 247 seconds. Wait time performance was impacted by high staff absence as a result of the Covid19 pandemic and associated changes to working arrangements during the period.

At the end of the reporting period the percentage of bilingual staff at the contact centre was constant at 27%. Training plans are in place to increase the range of enquiries that the bilingual staff cohort can resolve at the first point of contact. The service continues to provide a face-to-face Welsh language service at main corporate receptions, although these were not in operation during large periods during the reporting year due to lockdown restrictions.

- **Welsh language training and promotion activities**

The Council has continued to support formal Welsh language classes for staff as well as providing regular 'Blasu' sessions. 41 staff have enrolled this year. In addition, there is an opportunity for learners within the Council to chat to each other online with a new 'Grwp Ymarfer' which has been set up by one of the learners.

Classes have moved to Zoom from December 2020 which has meant a wider reach with learners joining in from other countries. Blended learning has gathered pace where learners look at online content to prepare for the tutor led Zoom lesson (2.5 hours). This allows them to cover one unit per week rather than half a unit. These learners complete one level in a year.

During the year the LearnWelsh team have run Sadwrn Seiber courses for revision with good numbers. They also held a gig with Dafydd Iwan which was available to all learners in Wales. This was for Dydd Miwsig Cymru and involved one of our learners in the radio programme on Radio Cymru.

On 1st March we have two national coffee mornings one for Mynediad/Sylfaen and the other for Canolradd/Uwch. There were around 200 participants including at least one from Patagonia

'Ar Lafar' the Welsh learners festival will be virtual again rather than live in Saint Fagans.

Events for 'Mae gen I Hawl' / Welsh Rights Day and St David's Day took place this year on the Council's Staffnet and involved quizzes and information celebrating our culture. We also shared stories of achievements throughout the Council. We launched a weekly session on Bro Radio of Welsh phrases to encourage residents to learn and use their Welsh. The 10-week agreement has recently been renewed and phrases will be adapted to help when people start going out and about again in the Vale. We also asked people to tweet a phrase to teach a friend.

- **Work Welsh**

A number of staff have completed the 10-hour Welsh Welcome Course which can be accessed via our Staffnet. There is also a special module for Social Services staff. We have registered interest with the National Learning Team for the forthcoming year for Online Taster courses, Online Self-study, Use of Welsh and Confidence Building for Welsh speakers.

- **Welsh language awareness Module**

The Council is in the process of setting up an online learning module on Welsh Language Awareness. We are hoping to roll this out to all staff and that it will be compulsory. We will be using a module which was developed and successfully rolled out by Cardiff Council and which will be adapted for the Vale.

- **Agreement with Menter Bro Morgannwg**

A framework for partnership working was agreed in 2019 for a further three years. The aim is to provide a range of community activities for local residents, including children, young people, families and adult learners in order to promote the use of Welsh. This year Menter have managed to provide workshops online including singing, drama and make-up during each half-term. They also held quizzes and were able to provide a digital festival event as part of Tafwyl 2020. Much of their work contributes to our 5-year Promotion Strategy.

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- **Translation agreement with Cardiff Council**

The Council signed a contract with Cardiff Council for all Welsh translation work in September 2017 following a successful period with a Service Level Agreement. During 2020/21 a total of 1,888,192 words were translated. The contract finishes in August 2021 and a tender process will be undertaken in 2021.

- **Linguistic Skills Assessment**

The Council carried out a second Linguistic Skills Audit in September 2018. Computer users provided information on their Welsh language skills. This was rolled out by means of Metacompliance software. We have been able to update details of nearly 1600 staff and this enables us to target information at Welsh speakers as well as providing an updated list for internal use. A further audit is planned for 2022.

- **Welsh speaking spellchecker/email footers etc**

All Council staff have received a copy of 'Cysgair' on their computers. We have recently purchased licences for the latest version of this software and this has been installed on all council computers enabling staff to communicate more easily in Welsh and to feel confident about their grammar.

We have arranged for all council staff to have bilingual footers with their job titles and to have bilingual out-of-office messages. In a recent development, a prominent logo has been added to the names of those who speak Welsh fluently and a separate logo to indicate members of staff who are learning Welsh. This has proved particularly helpful during the current period of working from home. In addition, Welsh speaking staff and learners are able to wear lanyards to indicate their skills when in the office.

- **Page on Staffnet for Welsh speakers/Reminders**

A dedicated page on our Staffnet provides useful information for Welsh speakers as well as setting out their rights regarding internal documentation. We ran a campaign entitled 'Think Cymraeg' which encouraged staff to be aware of the most important areas of their work where use of Welsh can make a big difference. We also direct staff to suitable courses.

- **Mwy Na Geiriau**

This regional group which was originally set up to implement the Welsh Government action plan has recently started to meet again. Those involved include representatives from Cardiff Council Social Services and the Vale Social Services as well as a representative of the Health Board. The purpose is to share good practice and to jointly develop ideas for increasing the use of the language. Several initiatives have been progressed including a pilot project for recruitment of Welsh speakers. Future plans include raising awareness via attendance at joint jobs fairs and promoting the Welsh language offer on a new staff social media channel (YAMA).

3. Summary of the Council's Action Plan with Progress

	Action	Areas covered	Standard Ref. No.	Comment/ update
1	Provide a briefing note for senior managers/elected members to be cascaded via CMT/DMT/team meetings	<p>Correspondence Telephone calls Meetings/appointments</p> <p>Public Events</p> <p>Publishing docs for the public</p> <p>Social Media responses</p> <p>Policies/strategies available to the public</p> <p>Licences/certificates</p> <p>Official notices</p> <p>Promotion of the Welsh language</p> <p>Public address systems</p>	<p>1-5 19/20/21 24-26b, 27a-d,30- 34,65-66</p> <p>35-38</p> <p>43-50</p> <p>58-59</p> <p>44 42</p> <p>69-70</p> <p>81-82</p> <p>87</p>	<p>A briefing note was issued via Staffnet and via core brief. An FAQ page is available on Staffnet.</p> <p>Departmental team meetings were addressed during May/June 16. Advice continues to be sought from the corporate lead officers.</p>

2	Provide a briefing for Business Cabinet/senior managers/other elected members	Correspondence Telephone calls Meetings/appointments Public Events Publishing docs for the public Social Media responses Policies/strategies available to the public Licences/certificates Official notices Promotion of the Welsh language Public address systems	1-5 19/20/21 24-26b, 27a-d,30- 34,65-66 35-38 43-50 58-59 44 42 69-70 81-82 87	Cabinet members were briefed in February 16. Fresh sessions were held for new elected members in 2017 and 2019.
3	Compile a page on the Council's Staffnet to inform staff of their responsibilities.	As above.	As above.	A list of FAQ's is on Staffnet. A page for Welsh speakers has also been developed.

4	Inform staff via core brief and other methods.	As above.	As above.	Staff were informed in February 16 via core brief and updates have continued.
5	Ensure that all letter templates and emails as well as responses to the press indicate the availability of a Welsh language service and ensure that all staff use them.	Correspondence (refers also to some Operational Standards)	7 Also relates to Operational Standards 134/135	Templates have been issued to all staff. Translated job titles appear on all emails as well as a prominent logo for Welsh speakers and learners.
6	Provide 'Meet and Greet' training to frontline staff	Tel calls/meetings	19,20,21,24-27	Training for staff took place in 2016/17 and awareness training took place in early 2018. A Welsh Welcome module is available on Staffnet as part of the WorkWelsh Welcome initiative.
7	Ensure that all staff use bilingual out-of office messages. Provide footers to indicate if members of staff speak Welsh.	Correspondence (refers also to operational standards)	7, Also relates to Operational Standards 134/138	Part of Staffnet and on core brief. Out-of-office messages have been provided to all staff. Also an indicator of Welsh speakers and learners.
8	Ensure that all statements to the press are bilingual where possible.	Publishing Docs and forms	46	This has taken place from 1 st April 2016.
9	Ensure that all leaflets, documents, statements and press releases, where issued in English include reference to the fact that a Welsh language version is available on request.	Publishing Docs and forms	46	This has taken place from 1 st April 2016.
10	Arrange for support to begin process of making the whole website bilingual.	Website and on-line services	52-56	The website is now fully bilingual.
11	Arrange for pre-entry of forms to be bilingual	Website and online services	51	Internal applications are all translated - external applications are in the

				process of getting organised as part of the Digital Strategy.
12	Ensure that all new or replacement signs and/or notices are bilingual with Welsh first.	Signs/notices	61-63	All staff have been reminded of this.
13	Ensure that main reception areas provide a Welsh service with signage advising of the availability of that service.	Reception areas	64,67,68	Main reception areas are now bilingual.
14	Invitations for grants must state that submissions can be made in Welsh and interviews must be offered if requested. There must be no delay if Welsh is used. Invitations to tender for contracts must be bilingual and must state that Welsh tenders are welcome. There must be no delay if Welsh is used.	Grants/Tenders	72-75,76-77a	This information has been cascaded within the Finance department.
15	Assess every new education course offered to the public to evaluate the need to provide it in Welsh <u>and keep a record of the assessment.</u>	Education	84-86	Adult Education and Youth Service have been informed about this.
16	Translate agendas of all Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings	Democratic	41	This has taken place from 1 st April 16.
17	Translate minutes of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings	Democratic	41	Agendas are bilingual, with plans to publish decision notices and minutes imminently.
18	Impact assessment, including consideration for Welsh language, to	Policies & research	88-97	To be achieved by reference in relevant cabinet/ committee reports.

	be completed on all new or amended policies.			
19	Establish project group to organise questionnaire for all staff	Linguistic skills and language preferences for forms and procedures	104, 127,100,101-103	A second audit took place in 2018 of all computer-based staff and the results are now available.
20	Translate all HR policies	All HR policies	105 – 111	All policies now translated.
21	Raise awareness of staff in relation to offering Welsh language provision in relation to new contracts, complaints and disciplinary situations	Briefing	99,114,118	A list has been compiled of those users requesting Welsh. A page on Staffnet lists the specific items that we are obliged to provide in Welsh.
22	Prepare page on Staffnet & core brief article informing Welsh speaking staff of their rights & providing support for learners.	HR procedures	112 – 125,141-143	This is now available.
23	Provide Welsh speaking staff with software for spelling & grammar checks & Welsh language interfaces where available.	ICT software	120	'Cysgeir' has been installed on the computers of all staff.
24	Provide opportunities for basic Welsh language training for all staff and also for managers if required in their role. Further training should be free of charge to the employee.	Training	130 -131	Taster courses take place on a regular basis and this has helped to increase the number of learners on full-time courses. All Welsh language courses are free of charge and in work time.
25	Provide Welsh language awareness training	Training	132	A new online module is being adapted and will be rolled out to staff during Summer 2021.

26	Include Welsh language information in Corporate Induction	Training	133	Welsh information Is included and presented at induction.
27	Assess all new and vacant posts for required level of Welsh and record as appropriate.- Essential/Needs to be learnt/Desirable/Not necessary	Review of procedures	136	All managers have been informed. All posts are currently categorised as Welsh either 'Essential' or 'Desirable'
28	All relevant material relating to recruitment is available in Welsh and English.	Recruitment/selection procedures	137	Has been translated and is sent out as required.
29	Prepare a policy on the use of Welsh internally	Awareness	98	A copy is available. This needs to be reviewed during 2021/22.
30	Intranet should be available in Welsh – homepage, new/amended pages and menus.	ICT/Communications team	122-126	Bilingual pages are available on Staffnet.
31	Specific HR courses to be provided in Welsh- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruitment and Interviewing - Performance Management - Complaints and Disciplinary procedures - Induction - Dealing with the public - Health and Safety 	HR training	128	Online courses include- Violence against Women Training online (NHS).
32	Provide training on effective use of Welsh in HR meetings	Training	129	This training will be arranged in 2021.
33	Identify a member of staff in each department to act as a champion.			This has been done and a list is available.

4. Information on performance

The Council collects and reports information on all measures that are national statutory measures and sets targets for them. We have also adopted a limited number of local indicators which assist in measuring progress against this scheme. This information is publicly available via the Council's Improvement Plan and service plans, which are published annually and is available on the Council's website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk.

In addition to this the Council publishes this report on the Equalities section of the Council website along with other data on language matters.

Information below relates to indicators requested by the Welsh Commissioner:

<p>Standard 158 (2) 164 (2) 170 (2d)</p> <p>Number of complaints about implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme.</p> <p>This performance indicator will be measured on the basis of the number of those complaints about the content or implementation of the Welsh language Standards.</p>	<p>We received several informal comments from members of the public. We responded individually to these. We received two formal complaints from the Welsh Commissioner and one complaint which was subsequently not investigated.</p> <p>The first formal complaint related to the issue of Street Naming and we are awaiting the outcome of that investigation. We have drafted a new policy on this subject which will be presented to Cabinet for approval.</p> <p>The second complaint was received late in March 2021 and related to a sign painted on the highway. This was resolved immediately and we received a</p>
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	<p>message of thanks from the complainant. We have recently written to the Commissioner to ask if the investigation can be terminated.</p>										
<p>Standard 170 (2a)</p> <p>Number of staff with Welsh skills in the Council.</p> <p>This indicator has been measured as part of the Linguistic Skills Survey in September 2018.</p>	<p>A linguistic skills survey took place at the end of 2018 of all computer users. This indicated that 122 members of staff consider themselves 'good' or 'fluent' of 1572 responses. This represents a percentage of 6%. A further audit is planned for 2021.</p>										
<p>Standard 170 (2b)</p> <p>Number of staff undertaking training and to what level/degree of proficiency.</p> <p>This will be based on the number of staff undertaking Welsh language training provided by the Council. This measure will be reported as a number under each of the categories: Entry and Foundation; Intermediate; Advanced; Advanced/Mastering.</p>	<p><u>2020-2021</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Entry Level</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foundation</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Intermediate</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advanced/Mastering</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>41</td> </tr> </table>	Entry Level	22	Foundation	3	Intermediate	14	Advanced/Mastering	2	Total	41
Entry Level	22										
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Total	41										
<p>Standards 154,170 ch)</p> <p>The number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as Welsh essential and desirable.</p>	<p>April 2020 – March 2021 - 386 adverts were logged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 Welsh essential • 372 Welsh desirable <p>All advertisements are either Welsh essential or Welsh desirable.</p>										

The Council's continued priority for 2021/22 is to increase the number of Welsh speakers in the workforce, to encourage more members of staff to learn or update their Welsh language skills and to promote the use of the language in the Vale.