



**Vale of Glamorgan Council  
Welsh Language Scheme**

**Annual Monitoring Report 2013-14**

## **Introduction**

The council's current Welsh Language Scheme was approved in March 2012 outlining a commitment to provide Welsh language services on a basis of equality with English. We have continued to implement the accompanying action plan and detail is included with commentary on the progress on each area of work. The plan has been reviewed regularly; implementation is coordinated by the Equalities team. Actions were incorporated into departmental service plans, which form an integral part of the council's performance management framework. This ensures that performance is monitored quarterly by the council's scrutiny committees

In line with the Welsh Language Measure 2011, the Council has completed a detailed questionnaire on the proposed Welsh Standards and is awaiting the compliance notice.

An Audit of Welsh Language skills was included in a recent questionnaire to all staff and results have been entered into the Oracle system. Information is also routinely collected of the skills of applicants for posts within the council.

In the meantime the council is continuing to develop the Welsh language skills of its staff. Seven members of staff are currently attending Welsh language courses. We have also offered free sessions on a weekly basis for the past three months and these have proved popular and successful. Tea/coffee is provided during the lunch hour and learners are able to practise their Welsh in an informal setting. A number of staff have used these sessions as a springboard to join formal courses and others have continued to attend to practise their skills.

The Equalities team continues to work closely with the Welsh for Adults team to encourage more staff to join formal courses. An evening a week is currently being devoted to Welsh medium activities in the Adult Learning Centre in Barry.

We are also working closely with Cardiff University WFA team to hold focus groups and to develop a mentoring scheme involving Welsh speakers and learners.

The recent setting up of Menter Bro Morgannwg will hopefully mean extra resources to develop out-of-school activities and other activities for adults in the Vale.

The Sports & Play Development Team, in partnership with the Urdd, have continued to develop and provide sports opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The 5x60 Officer linked to Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg, aims to increase the number of young people participating in sport and physical activity within extra-curricular and community based provision. This is being achieved by creating new opportunities, and further developing and signposting young people to existing community based opportunities within community clubs and leisure centres. The types of 5x60 activities being offered at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg include Yoga, basketball, Zumba, football, rugby, dodgeball, badminton, street dance, table tennis and golf.

For the academic period September 2012 – August 2013 58% of the pupils at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg (398 pupils) participated in activity within the 5x60 scheme. There were a total of 5019 participations in 5x60 activities, 2000 of which were female participations.

455 pupils from Ysgol y Fro completed the School Sport Survey during the summer term 2013. This means that we now have a school report for Bro Morgannwg which indicates things such as:

- participation rates within extra-curricular and community clubs
- pupils attitude to PE and sport
- what activities pupils currently take part in and what they would like to participate in
- barriers to participation

This information is being used by the 5x60 officer to plan future activities and is also discussed with PE staff and other school staff.

It is hoped that previous participation will be exceeded this academic term with positive statistics already being achieved in the first term with 35% of Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg pupils participating in 5x60 activities. There has been a focus this term on increasing participation amongst female Welsh speakers within Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg with 43% of the female pupils participating in 5x60 activities in the autumn term.

There has also been a focus on developing leadership opportunities with 33 pupils

attending leadership / AYP courses which have been run in conjunction with the Sports & Play Development team and the Urdd. It is hoped these pupils will now be actively involved in assisting with the delivery and organisation of sports activities through the medium of Welsh.

Guidance on Welsh language training and publications has been streamlined so that officers are aware of their obligations under the Welsh Language Scheme. This has helped managers to target training within their teams and to be aware of where publications should be produced bilingually.

Welsh language pages are available on the council's internal Staffnet to inform staff of language developments in the workplace. Guidance documents are published on these pages as well as a copy of the council's scheme, reports and Publication Guide.

The council has adopted a Content Management System (CMS) to update its website ([www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)). This website provides a prominent toggle button on the front page allowing the user to choose between an English or Welsh interface/content. The domain name [www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk](http://www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk) points users directly to the Welsh language version of the website. The Welsh website is a replica of the English version, and the council is committed to translating it in its entirety down to the first three layers wherever we have stated we will do so. Beyond three levels, translation of pages and documents will be undertaken according to demand, so that the most popular pages are available bilingually. Following consultation with our Welsh speaking residents, the council has committed in its action plan to ensure that the top ten most popular web pages are fully bi-lingual. Every effort will be made to release key information simultaneously in English and in Welsh, although this will not always be possible and there may be a delay.

The Council employs a part-time web translator as well as a full-time translator.

Significant work has been undertaken to ensure that electoral information and on-line forms are fully bi-lingual. Interaction with Welsh language web users will increase in order to establish their existing and changing needs and to aid with continuous development.

The accuracy of translation of documents into Welsh is given a high priority throughout the council and all documents are directed to the Welsh translator who is

based within the Communications team in the Corporate and Customer Services Department. Approximately 400 documents have been translated so far this year by the council's Welsh language translator. These include letters, forms, public notices and council publications. The Welsh language and Web translators have been brought together and Welsh translation software has been purchased by the council to increase productivity. We have contributed to the provision of information for a Wales-wide translation service, and await developments from Welsh Government.

## 1. Welsh Language Scheme Compliance

WLS 62		Publish and promote the Linguistic Skills strategy.	Raise awareness of staff	Completed; the plan has been implemented and promoted.
WLS 63		Develop and implement a Welsh Language Training and Development Strategy	Tailored training is available and monitored	The strategy has reviewed and is in place.
WLS 64		Promote and publish the Welsh Language Scheme	Staff are aware of their responsibilities	Completed; the WLS is widely used as a basis for responding to requests. Public information not produced bilingually is removed from display and complaints are raised with the officer responsible.
WLS 65		Ensure that linguistic skills information is collected from all staff	Key information is obtained on staff skills	Awaiting the results of a recent audit.
WLS 66		Ensure that signage and badges are visible in reception areas	Residents will feel welcome to speak in Welsh when visiting Council premises	Completed; signs are prominent in all reception areas and Welsh speakers wear badges.
WLS 67		Ensure that adequate numbers of Welsh speaking staff are available in the Contact Centre	Welsh language users are able to access information and services in preferred language	Completed; of 35.5 Customer Service Representatives in the contact centre six of those are Welsh speakers.
WLS 68		Arrange for the translation of all on-line forms and information regarding electoral registration	Arrangements for elections are bilingual	Completed.
WLS 69		Ensure that staff who speak Welsh have bi-lingual Email footers	Residents are aware of when they can respond in Welsh	Completed. All Welsh speakers have 'Hapus i gyfathrebu yn gymraeg'
WLS 70		Ensure that the top ten web pages	The most popular parts of the	Completed; now standard practice.

		accessed by residents are fully bilingual	website are available in Welsh	
WLS 71		Ensure that translation of current news, updates and jobs takes priority over other web translations	The most important elements of the website are translated quickly	Completed; now standard practice.
WLS 72		Review the Welsh language content of the website	Regular checks will ensure that Welsh is correctly used	Completed; now standard practice.
WLS 73		Review the job descriptions and person specifications of reception staff and revise for new staff to include Welsh language abilities	Managers are able to provide Welsh language facilities in frontline areas	Completed.
WLS 74		Assist elected members to publicise and improve their skills	Residents are aware of which members are Welsh speaking	4 training sessions for elected members took place in April and May 2013. These were with The Independent Group, Corporate Resources (Scrutiny), the Cabinet and Plaid Cymru. Some elected members are enrolled as Welsh learners.
WLS 46		Introduce a "jobs fair" with Barry College and Ysgol Bro Morgannwg to encourage work experience and job applicants with Welsh language skills	Staff skills reflect the needs of the service to provide bilingual services	A link with Ysgol Bro Morgannwg has been established. A meeting will be taking place to further discuss job fairs and prospective jobs for school leavers as well as work experience.
WLS 75		Prepare guidance for officers who are involved in partnership working	Officers are aware of the Council's commitment to the Welsh Language	Completed
WLS 76		Ensure that the HR Strategy and Workforce Plan reflect the Linguistic Skills Strategy	Mainstream the LSS as part of workforce planning	Completed

WLS 77		Review language used in bi-lingual job descriptions to ensure clarity for Welsh speakers	Clear Welsh is used in job descriptions	The Welsh translator will keep a record of any request for job descriptions and will work with the Corporate Equalities Officer
WLS 78		Outline the level of Welsh required in specific job roles	Clarity on level of Welsh for each role	The Corporate Equalities Officer checks on any new advertisements.
WLS 79		Undertake a new 'Mae gen ti ddewis' campaign to encourage more use of the Contact Centre phone line	The availability of the Welsh Language line is publicised and awareness increased resulting in increased use of the service	We have been unable to obtain funding to date for this project.
WLS 80		Provide awareness training to key staff on a regular basis as well as informal opportunities to practise their Welsh skills	Staff are aware of Welsh language issues and are able to improve their skills	Informal language sessions have been running for the last year.
WLS 81		Develop a structured working relationship with Menter y Fro in order to help WL development particularly in leisure and in relation to privatisation	Increased support for learners and residents	The Council is involved with the new entity – 'Menter Bro Morgannwg' to improve opportunities in the Vale for Welsh speakers.
WLS 82		Include WL issues in recruitment and selection training	Awareness among managers regarding the LSS requirements	Completed.
WLS 83		Design and circulate a database for use by departments to register individuals and organisations who wish to communicate with the council in Welsh.	The council is aware of those residents who wish to deal with the council in Welsh	Has not been completed – will be carried forward.



WLS 6 (on-going)		Undertake an audit of council publications and documents, and promotional materials	Managers are complying with the Welsh Language Scheme	As a result of re-structuring this audit has been delayed until September 2014.
WLS 7 (cf)		Contact centre staff establish and communicate the language preference of customers to back office staff	Welsh language customers receive information in their preferred language	Dec 2013 .Will form Part of the new standards
WLS 9 (cf)		Undertake an annual audit of new strategic documents to assess achievement of WLS objectives	All strategic documents are translated as appropriate	Completed and passed to the web translator in January. Will be reviewed regularly.
WLS 83		Provide information on linguistic skills in the annual monitoring report	Data is provided to WLB on an annual basis	Completed
WLS 84		Monitor Service Plans to ensure that actions in respect of the Vale Equality Scheme and targets are being effectively implemented	Welsh Language actions are monitored as part of Service Plans	June 2014
WLS 85		Review the current format of job advertisements in order to increase the bilingual content	More bilingual content in advertisements	Our Human Resources team have not yet done this despite reminders. Will be included in the new Standards regime.

## **2. Welsh Language Frontline Services**

### **Children and Young People's Partnership**

The Council's Welsh-medium Education Strategic Plan highlights that despite its large and diverse area, Welsh medium education in the Vale is thriving. The growing demand is highlighted in the recent establishment of two new Welsh medium schools.

The WESP Group has been established with representatives from various council departments, schools and local Welsh language organisations. The group has developed an action plan to address the strategic priorities of education and include those within the CYPP Plan to 'promote the development of a bilingual workforce' and 'to support children and young people's opportunities to use the Welsh language'. This involves training Welsh speakers in workforce skills shortage areas and raising awareness of children and young people of their right to use the Welsh language when participating in activities, services and provision.

Examples include: a bilingual youth provision developed within the Youth Service on two separate nights; additional support for year 6 pupils in transition to year 7; development of a Welsh language youth forum; funding for the development of sports activities in conjunction with the Urdd; In addition the Youth Service is working in partnership with the Urdd providing Welsh language curriculum activity training for Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers, including OCN Courses and School Radio Training.

On an individual basis all partnership members continue to ensure that the Welsh language receives recognition within all their plans and developments.

### **Ability to guarantee a Welsh language service at main receptions, contact centres or one-stop shops**

The contact centre has a staff of 35.5 Customer Service Representatives with 6 front line call handlers, including three reception trained staff. We are able to provide all contact centre services through the medium of Welsh. We are in the process of recruiting more Welsh speakers which will be done during the first quarter of 2014/15.

We advertise bilingually one telephone number for the public to use to contact the Council, which includes a dedicated Welsh language option, with every caller to the council given the option to have their enquiry handled through the medium of Welsh. 100% of calls received on the Welsh language line are routed to a Welsh speaker. The line is fully staffed between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm in line with the contact centre opening hours. In addition to telephone calls, the contact centre is able to respond to other contact channels in Welsh including emails and SMS text messages.

During 2013/14 just over 1,300 calls were answered and dealt with through the medium of Welsh. The council is confident that the majority of enquiries can be answered in just one contact, without having to transfer the caller to other departments within the council. To date there has been a very positive response to the Welsh language service from the Welsh speaking public although numbers of calls have reduced in line with the English line as more customers choose to contact us via SMS and Email.

### **Standards of Service**

The council's complaints procedure was assessed by the Welsh Language Board in January 2009 and found to be fully compliant. Complaints are logged either on the council's customer relations system or by departments. Any complaints relating to the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme are recorded and monitored by the Equalities team. A list of complaints is attached along with any remedial action required.

Complaints received in the medium of Welsh are also recorded as part of the customer relations management software within the contact centre to ensure that a response is sent in Welsh.

## **3. Scheme Management and Administration**

### **Human Resources – Equality and Diversity – Language Ability**

The equalities monitoring form includes questions on candidates' spoken and written Welsh skills as well as their ability to understand and read Welsh. This information is recorded on the Oracle human resources system.

In 2010 our linguistic skills audit indicated that large numbers of staff have some Welsh skills – in excess of 400 staff indicated a basic level of Welsh ability. A significant number also indicated an interest in learning or improving their skills. This has enabled us to target training invitations and to get in touch with bilingual staff when we need them. It also helps team leaders to plan training.

The latest audit which took place in the summer of 2013 will provide more up-to-date information.

## **Procurement**

The council's procurement guidance has been reviewed and the legal contractual arrangements improved to ensure robust consideration of the Welsh Language Scheme. Key contracts include a requirement to comply with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme.

## **4. Linguistic Skills - Comparing service needs and capacity**

### **Welsh in the Workplace Training and Language Awareness Training**

Informal sessions have been running on a weekly basis since the autumn. Initially the sessions were held at the civic offices at lunch time on a Friday. Following increased interest from Social Services staff a new 10 week course has just begun at the Dock's office, where they are based.

In addition to this a mentoring scheme for staff is being considered. This would involve Welsh speaking staff agreeing to meet with Welsh learners on a regular basis to offer support and help with their modules.

We hope to offer a course to improve your Welsh to learners ahead of a new year of courses in September. The aim of this is to ease a lack of confidence in speaking Welsh following a break over the summer.

We have agreed to hold focus groups with a range of staff members who do not speak Welsh and who have not learnt Welsh. The aim of this is to help the Cardiff University Welsh for Adults team with a research project which looks at why people do not wish to learn Welsh. Elected members are encouraged to join in any of these activities.

## 5. Mainstreaming

Equality impact assessments covering all equalities strands including the Welsh language are undertaken on major corporate policies, the council's budget and on some functions. This helps to ensure that Welsh is mainstreamed and monitored equally with the other issues.

The Welsh language action plan is reviewed regularly by the Equalities team alongside the action plans for other equalities strands. This ensures that the issues are at the forefront of day-to-day developments.

Major council strategies were reviewed during 2012 to ensure that a summary is available in Welsh. Public notices and publications are checked on an annual basis by the Communications team. This has not yet been completed for 2013 as a result of changes in staffing in the Communications team.

Equalities issues are mainstreamed through the council's performance management framework. All departmental service plans contain equalities objectives, with risks, performance measures and actions. Measures are reviewed quarterly by the relevant scrutiny committee; actions are reviewed six-monthly in the same manner.

The Equalities team has developed the 'Vale Equalities Scheme' (VES). This was introduced in 2007 and was based on the Welsh Local Government Association's Equality Standard of which the Vale Council had achieved level 3. The VES was developed to assist in the 'mainstreaming' of equalities matters, with managers in all service areas taking responsibility for equalities. In the first year, managers were set a target to achieve level 1 and then further levels each year. The current target is for all relevant service areas to achieve level 4 and many have already done so. Language is a key element of the VES. The scheme is developed, assessed and monitored by the Equalities team.

The council has an internal officer working group (Corporate Equalities Working Group) through which information is cascaded to departments, and issues can be raised and discussed. It also operates a, Equalities Consultative Forum, which is a formal committee of the council and consists of elected members and representatives from support and campaigning groups.

## **6. Analysis of Performance by priority and target**

The council monitors the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme through the following mechanisms:

- regular monitoring of action plans
- annual improvement planning, including achievement of targets and a summary of achievement of the Welsh Language Scheme;
- an annual report to the Corporate Management Team, the Scrutiny Committee and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Annual reports are compiled by the Equalities team in consultation with managers and officers involved in implementation of the scheme. Complaints in implementation are collated by the Equalities team and although these are very few it is important to the Council to identify where improvements can be made. The Council conducts periodic opinion surveys and arranges focus groups to consult Welsh speakers on the standard of service that they are receiving in Welsh.

## **7. Publishing 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 assists 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](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or [www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk](http://www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk).

In addition to this, once approved by Corporate Management Team, the council will publish this report on the Equalities section of the council website along with other data on language matters.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The level of conformity with Welsh language among third parties operating on behalf of the Council. The Council will undertake an annual sample of contracts with third parties to identify conformity issues with the requirements for the Welsh language as set out in the Council's procurement guidance. It will be reported as a percentage of those sampled (numerator and denominator will be provided).</li> </ul>	<p>The council's procurement guidance has been reviewed and the legal contractual arrangements improved to ensure robust consideration of the Welsh Language Scheme. A large contract was reviewed in December 2012 relating to the council's Leisure Services. Compliance with the council's Welsh Language Scheme was included.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on current staffing and recruitment to frontline posts. Frontline posts are those in the 'front office' of the Council and will be measured on the basis of these positions. Increasingly, this will come to mean the Onevale contact centre. It will be measured as a percentage of those identified in front line posts (numerator and denominator will be provided).</li> </ul>	<p>Of 35.5 Customer Service Representatives in the contact centre six are fluent Welsh speakers. This represents 17% of the team.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of staff undertaking training and to what level/degree of proficiency. This will be measured 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.</li> </ul>	<p>There are currently 7 members of staff who have enrolled on Welsh language training. (Sept 2013)  6 Entry Level 1  1 Canolradd.  Informal training also takes place on a weekly basis.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of staff with Welsh skills in the Council. This indicator was originally measured via the Linguistic Skills audit in 2010. A further audit will take place in 2013 with the results available in April 2014.</li> </ul>	<p>65 members of staff are 'competent' or 'fluent' and 400 members of staff have some basic skills. A new survey took place in June and July 2013. Information will be available shortly.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of complaints about implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme. This performance indicator will be measured on the basis of the number of those complaints about the content or implementation of the Welsh language scheme, which will be investigated by and responded to by the Equalities Team.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has received 5 complaints this year. A list is available.</p>
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## **8. Additional Information**

The Council has completed the detailed questionnaire required by the Welsh Commissioner and is awaiting a compliance notice. In the meantime we will continue to develop methods of recording activities in line with the new Welsh standards.

We will continue to work closely with other bodies such as the Welsh for Adults team, Menter Bro Morgannwg etc in order to provide opportunities for staff to develop their skills and to provide a more comprehensive service to our residents.

As part of this we will be working with Cardiff University to implement a mentoring scheme whereby new learners will be paired with Welsh speakers to improve their skills.