

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 23RD JANUARY, 2017

REFERENCE FROM LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 12TH DECEMBER, 2016

“ DRAFT WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION STRATEGY (REF) –

On 28th November 2016 Cabinet had referred the report to the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for consideration as part of the consultation process.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure had been enacted by the Welsh Assembly in 2011 and the Welsh Language Commissioner had issued every Local Authority in Wales with a Compliance Notice, which included a list of 172 Standards, in September 2015. Standard 145 of the Compliance Notice required the Council to produce and publish a five year Strategy which set out how the Council would promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in the Vale of Glamorgan. The Strategy was also to include a target for increasing or maintaining the percentage of Welsh speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan and a statement on how the target would be reached, with the Strategy being reviewed or revised every five years.

The Head of Service for Performance and Development advised that the requirement for the Strategy stemmed from the Welsh Language Standards, with the particular Standard requiring the Authority to publish a Welsh Strategy, recognising that a number of overlaps existed between this document and the Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan. Public consultation on the Strategy was to run for a period of six weeks, with final consideration to be made by Cabinet for implementation by 31st March, 2017.

The Promotion Strategy attached at Appendix A consisted of an introduction, background, policy context, Welsh language profile for the Vale of Glamorgan and included key language development areas as outlined below:

- Welsh medium education
- Language transmission in the home
- Welsh for adults
- Children, young people and families
- Community and leisure activities
- Welsh in the workplace.

Chapter 6 provided an action plan to promote the Welsh language in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Councillor Dr. Johnson, with permission to speak, advised that in his view further consideration in relation to the promotion of the Welsh Language should be included

in the Council's contract with Legacy Leisure and the Council should seek to pursue increasing the number of Welsh speaking staff in the Council. As a result he queried what the current position was in relation to staff, sought details as to the number of pupils from Barry College who had been appointed to positions in the Vale and queried the Council's response should requests be received for simultaneous translation services. The Chairman also requested whether there were any plans to host the Urdd Eisteddfod in the area.

The Head of Service in response stated that the Authority was aware that Welsh medium provision could be further promoted in Leisure Centres and said that consideration would be given to this by the Council's Leisure Service at the time of the renewal of the contract, which he stated was imminent. Following the introduction of the Standards, he could advise that the Council had been focusing on the translation of material into Welsh, with further work ongoing. With regard to the staff, an action plan covering a number of aspects had been in place since March 2016. He pointed out that to date there had not been any requests for simultaneous Welsh translation services from the public attending Scrutiny Committees although he advised that if requests were made the Council would have to meet any request. With regard to the question of the Urdd Eisteddfod being held in the Vale of Glamorgan, the officer advised that he would pass the request to the relevant department.

Following a query in respect of the accuracy of the figures identified on page 20, table 5, of the document and the fact that the report noted the capacity in Welsh medium primary schools would be increased from the current figure 1,693 to 2,100 places by 2017, the Interim Director advised that she would investigate further and report back to Members.

In accepting that further clarity would be presented to Members as outlined above and that a further report was to be presented to Cabinet, the Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDED – T H A T Cabinet be informed of the views of the Committee and following the results of the consultation, a further report be presented to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

Reason for recommendation

In view of the contents of the report and that a further report was to be prepared following the consultation.”