

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 3RD NOVEMBER, 2022

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 12TH OCTOBER, 2022

“363 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2021-22 (REF) –

The recommendation of Cabinet 21st July, 2022 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Director of Corporate Resources, the highlights of which included:

- Under the Welsh language standards legislation, the Council was required to produce an annual monitoring report (Appendix A) on areas such as what has been achieved in communications, access to services, translation services and training for Council staff and an Update on the Council’s Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, detailing how it had been implemented, with the current strategy reaching its fifth and final year.
- As well as providing a retrospective overview and information in terms of monitoring the Council’s achievements against the commitments in that strategy, going forward future reporting and updates on these standards would also provide greater context in terms of ‘case studies’ and ‘lived experiences’ concerning this topic.
- An interim version of these documents had been published online in order to comply with the relevant duties under the legislation.

Councillor Dr. Johnson raised the following questions or comments following the report:

- They felt the proposed case studies for future reports on these standards would be particularly useful in moving away from a ‘tick box’ approach, i.e. looking at staff experiences in learning Welsh and the user experience of Welsh speaking residents in accessing engaging with the Council via this medium.
- They also referred to the wording in the report about the Council’s ‘bilingual’ social media, when in fact some of these accounts were separate Welsh and English ones (i.e. Twitter). The Director confirmed that this was correct, the reason being that separate accounts for English and Welsh provided a better user experience and, following the Chair’s suggestion, the wording could be revisited in order to clarify this.
- They also queried the recruitment of bilingual staff into the Council’s contact centre (C1V) and the need to build relationships with local Welsh medium schools as a potential ‘pool’ for this. The Director stressed the importance of pursuing recruitment of bilingual staff from local Welsh medium schools and increasing the overall number of Welsh speaking staff as part of the promotion

strategy. They would share this with colleagues in Human Resources to take forward and update the Committee on its progress going forward.

On Councillor Carroll's query about the costs associated with the Welsh translation agreement with Cardiff Council vis a vis costs for an 'in-house' service or another third-party provider, the Director stated he would find this out for the Committee and explained that the translation service contract had gone through a competitive tendering process with both public and private sector providers.

Having considered the reference and report and all the issues and implications contained therein, Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Annual Welsh Monitoring Report for 2021-22, as attached at Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report, and the Update on the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy, as set out at Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report, be endorsed, subject to the following amendment, to be referred to Cabinet for their consideration: that the reference to social media accounts in the Annual Welsh Language Report 2021 – 2022 be amended to reflect that, wherever relevant, the Council's social media accounts (i.e. Twitter) were operated under separate English and Welsh formats, rather than a single bilingual one.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the content of the Cabinet report to meet the reporting duty to the Welsh Commissioner as part of the Welsh Language Standards and in order to accurately reflect the status of the relevant social media accounts.”