REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS 2017-18

CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL

1. Background

The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 establishes a legal framework that places a duty on the Council to comply with the standards in relationship to the Welsh language. A standard explains how organisations are expected to use the language in different situations.

The duties that derive from the standards mean that the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than the English language in Wales, and that the Council is obliged to promote the use of Welsh (i.e. facilitate the people in using the language in their daily lives).

The Language Standards are divided into five fields:

- service delivery
- policy making
- operational
- promotion
- record keeping

This Council received a compliance notice from The Welsh Language Commissioner under Section 4 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, on 30 September 2015. This notice specified the precise standards the Council is required to comply with and on 30 March 2016 a 147 standards came into force, with four further standards relating to promotion coming into effect on 30 March 2017.

As a result of the Council's historical commitment to the Welsh language, it had already been complying with a significant number of the standards set through the implementation of its Language Plan and indeed, this plan went further than the Welsh language standards in several areas.

It was considered that the Council's current commitment to the Welsh language should not be weakened by limiting its commitment to simply complying with the Welsh language standards only, and consequently a new Language Policy was developed.

The aim of the Council's Language Policy – the principal means of ensuring it conforms to the Language Standards – is ensuring that all Gwynedd residents have access to the Council's services through the medium of Welsh or English language. The principle is followed that both Welsh and English languages are equal, but that the COuncail also works proactively to ensure the Welsh language is seen and heard first.

2. Conforming to the Standards:

In this section, we draw attention to any Standards where the Council have taken action or given special consideration – beyond the implementation of the Language Policy – during the last year. Ation is taken to ensure that we do our very best on behalf of Gwynedd's residents in proactively offering Welsh services and also in encouraging and promoting more use of the Welsh language while accesssing services.

SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS

Gwynedd Council has a duty to comply with 70 service delivery standards and six additional service delivery standards. As a result of the Council's historical commitment to the Welsh language, it was already operating in accordance with or going beyond the requirements of many of these standards when they were imposed on the Council by the Welsh language Commissioner.

STANDARD	CONTENT OF THE STANDARDS	ACTION
7+14+21+ 30+32	Service Delivery Standards' realting to **asking** the individual whether or not they wish to receive services in Welsh or stating that we welcome communicating through Welsh	The Language Policy and the historic commitment of the Council to the Welsh Language has normalized the use of Welsh and there is a growing awareness among the general public that they can receive services and correspondence by the Council in Welsh. However, following an investigation into an alleged failure to adhere to the Standards last year, discussions were had regarding the Standards that involve "informing" the residents of their option and right to have their communicating wiuth the Council in Welsh, or "ask" for their language of choice. At present, we are confident that the current mode of working suffices, and that a positive awareness exists among the general public regarding their linguistic options. However, we will be ensuring that this matter is discussed regularly as we develop a better understanding of the way people communicate with us, and we will revise the situation as we develop new communication arrangements such as online selfservice.

35+36	Service Delivery Standards relating to public events	Prioty will always be given to the Welsh language in events hosted by the Council, and conditions will be applied in financing contracts ensuring the Welsh is prominent. The Council is also working to influence events where it funds less than 50% of an event, referring the organisers to the Language Unit and Hunaniaith for further support in order to encourage more use of the language in big events across the county. This work will continue under the commitment that was agreed upon in the Council's Plan and the Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd.
52+55+56+ 57+58+ 59+60	Service Delivery Standards relating to the website, apps, social media and selfserivce machines	We still face numerous obstacles in regards to apps and websites, especially when purchasing external systems. We continue to deal with these causes individually to ensure that the public receive the best service and options. There needs to be a consistent effort to raise the awareness of external companies of the need to develop bilingual apps from the get-go, rather than adapting the app further down the line. At the moment, resources and time is spent negotiating and discussing with companies (who often targets the local authorities throughout Wales) to reach an understanding of the need to provide bilingualy. We will also consider developing more apps internally so that we can accommodate the local need, rather than being dependant on companies to adapt current apps or software to being bilingual ones. The Council itself has been developing more online services in the past year, and we will be monitoring the use of those services in order to assess whether or not there is more that we could be doing to encourage the use of the Welsh version.

SUPPLEMENTARY 155+156+157+ 158+159+160	Service Delivery Standards' involving the compliance to arrangments of the Service Delivery Standards'	The corporate complaints procedure is followed in the event of dealing with a language complaint, and that procedure can be seen on the Council's website. The Council writes and publishes an annual report in keeping with the Welsh Standards.

POLICY MAKING STANDARDS

Gwynedd Council has a duty to comply with 10 policy making standards, and 6 supplementary policy making standards. Again, the Council was already operating in accordance with or beyond the requirements of many of these standards when they were imposed on the Council by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

STANDARD	CONTENTS OF THE STANDARD	ACTION
88+89+90+94	Policy Making Standards relating to the consideration given to the impact of policies on the Welsh language and on Welsh speakers.	The Language Unit is taking a more prominent role within impact assessment work, offering an independent and expert voice while assessing the impact of a policy change or re-structuring services on the language. The impact assessment for matters of equality includes assessing the effects on the opportunities people have to use the Welsh language, and the language Unit will contribute to and verify any assessment to ensure any changes has the least effect possible.

OPERATION STANDARDS

STANDARD	CONTENTS OF THE STANDARD	ACTIONS
98	Operational Standards relating to developing a policy on the internal use of the Welsh language	The Language Policy states that Welsh is the administrative language within the Council, meaning that Welsh is prioritised in all internal operations, and that communication with the staff will be in Welsh. This commitment is given careful consideration while developing new systems (e.g. the staff's self-service on the Council's intranet that is currently being developed) in order to ensure that we prioritise the Welsh language, and encourage staff to use the Welsh versions, while also ensuring whenever possible that they have a right to choose their language of use if they are still learning and not so confident in using the Welsh version.

127+136+136A+	Operational Standards relating to assessing our employee's language skills	Every year, the Council gathers information by every deparment to ascertain the number of staff who can speak Welsh. The ability to speak Welsh is listed as an essential skill every time a post becomes vacant within the Council. This means that all of our staff need a certain level of knowledge or ability of the Welsh language. As a result of the Councils new appointment procedures and the need to denote a minimum level of Welsh language skills needed for new posts, we will in future be able gather more detailed information about the levels of staff's skills. Work has already commenced with some departments to identify current staff members skills, and all departments will be supported to complete this work by March 2019.
128+129+130 +131+132+133+	Operational Standards involving general training, linguistic training and awareness	The majority of the Council's training is provided in Welsh, with English courses only available at request. In the rare event of requiring specialist expertise and external services only will this standard be amended. We have worked alongside and successfully influenced some of our external providers during the year, with IOSH (health and safety courses) being one particular example, and having directed the matter for further support from the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Council's Learning and Development unit also are developing and adapting their own courses in order to fulfil their linguistic needs, especially the needs within leadership fields and courses and qualifications as ILM.

3. REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPERATIONAL STANDARDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF STANDARD 170

Standard 170 - (a) the number of employees that have Welsh language skills

The following data reports on the number of employees who have Welsh language skills, giving an analysis of the skills level per service:

This data does not contain information about GWE or North Wales Trunk Roads Agency (NWMTRA) as they are regional divisions that are administered by Gwynedd Council.

SERVICE	NUMBER OF STAFF	NUMBER OF FLUENT WELSH SPEAKERS	NUMBER OF LEARNERS / THOSE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND AND SPEAK WELSH TO A CERTAIN EXTENT	NUMBER OF THOSE WHO CANNOT UNDERSTAND OR SPEAK ANY WELSH
Education – Central staff **Teaching staff**[1]	177	177		
Environment	159	155	4	
Finance	204	202	2	
Corporate Support	190	190		
Economy and Community	531	504	22	5
Adult Health and Welfare	915	786	129 [2]	
Children and Supporting Families	238	209	29 [2]	
Highways and Municipal	546	530	16	
Gwynedd Consultancy	111	99	11	1
Corporate Leadership Team	33	33		
TOTAL	**3100**			

1 GWE is currently doing some work on planning and developing the workforce (funded by the Welsh Government) to assess the whole teaching workforce's language skills. Further details will be available soon.

2 Information is not gathered about learners or those without any skills as part of the service's annual data (STF) – only the total of staff that speak Welsh.

4. REPORTING ON STAFF TRAINING THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

A REPORT IN KEEPING WITH STANDARD REQUIREMENT 170 –

(b) number of staff members that attended training courses offered in the Welsh language during the year (based upon minutes kept in keeping with standard 152);

(c) if a course is offered in Welsh during the year, the percentage of the total number of staff that attended the Welsh version (based upon the minutes left according to standard 152);

Welsh is the language of every course within the Council, with English courses available upon request. If non-Wesh members or learners attend induction courses, the training will be offered bilingual.

The Learning and Developing team individually assess all situations and applications regarding training in English and consider the best approach for introducing the training without imparing other members who wish to follow the course through the medium of Welsh.

The only exception, where training will be conducted exclusively in English is when training is required within specialist fields where there is a lack of qualified Welsh instructors.

Number of internal training "events" between 1 April 2017 and 30 March 2018: **798**

This combination of 'corporate' and 'specialist' titles include a variety of training – face to face, e-modules and webinars etc.

Number of training titles between 1 April 2017 and 30 March 2018: **252**

TRAINING EVENTS	TOTAL	TITLE PERCENTAGE	ATTENDEES
Welsh	452	56.6%	1821
English	174	21.8%	894
Bilingual	172	21.6%	826

Therefore, attendee percentage of Welsh or bilingual training: **78.2%**

- The above figures calculate that one individual has attended all events – the figures do not reflect upon the number of individual staff that could have attended more than on course during the year
- Staff and councillors are inclusive in the totals
- The totals includes all kinds of training – face to face, webinar sessions, IT skills developing sessions, sessions which took place over a duriation of weeks, and workshops

Reporting on the Welsh Language Training 2017-2018

During the past year, a ***Learning and Development Officer (Welsh Language)*** has been appointed following the Welsh Co-ordinator's retirement in July 2017.

This appointment has enabled the Council to expand their provision of Welsh language training, and to look into establishing courses that develop the skills of Welsh speaking staff, as well as conituning to support those members of staff who need to learn Welsh or improve their use of the language for the purpose of their jobs.

The amounts of leaners attending external courses (especially community based ones) reduced in the transfer period between the two jobs, and a number of factors and reasons may have contributed to said reduction. It is possible some individuals have been lost while transferring responsibilities to the new officer. It could also be the case that some individuals may have finished their courses, or decided to give up, or that the Council have appointed fewer individuals without Welsh skills into new jobs during the year. Confusion may have also arisen due to many changes in the external provision.

For example, the changes in structure and arrangements by ***Cymraeg i Oedolion*** caused some disorder at beginning because of the new means of registering onto a course (individuals would secure their own place online rather than the previous procedure of doing so through the internal training co-ordinator). During this period, a productive relationship was formed between the Learning and Development team and the Welsh for Adults Centre in Bangor, which resulted in overcoming matters relatively easy on the whole. ***Dysgu Cymraeg Gogledd Orllewin*** currently is the main provider.

Despite that, we have noticed a substantial increase in the number of people attending grammatical courses during the year and the response to the new courses which include grammar and writing skills has been very positive.

Regarding the provision offered to the learners, the below arrangements were used according to individual needs:

- Community based courses over a prongloned period of time (learners attending once or twice weekly within the community)
- Welsh Enhancement Sessions held regulary (since January 2018) by the Learning and Development Office (Welsh Language) e.g. Mutation, Elementary Welsh
- Individual 1:1 sessions with the Learning and Development Officer (Welsh Language) upon individual request
- Individual 1:1 sessions with external tutors upon individual request
- Intense courses (a week or longer – held at the Universities or Nant Gwrtheryn)
- Occassional courses – e.g. *Welsh within the Workplace* (two days)
- Summer schools (held by Dysgu Cymraeg Gogledd Orllewin)
- Online courses by Dysgu Cymraeg (Learn Welsh)
- A weekly morning class held internally: Mastery Level Class (Upper Level 2)

Summary (number of current individuals):

Course	Location and Date	Number of Individuals
Community courses (at Master, Foundation, Primary and Advanced levels)	Available locations across north west Wales according to demand. Usually attended once weekly for two hours over the course of two years (dependant on both hours of engagement and level)	19
Welsh within the Workplace	2 days of June 2018 at Bangor University	2
Master Level Class (with the Learning and Development Office (Welsh Language))	Mawddach Learning Room, the Learning Centre, every Wednesday morning between 9:30-12:00 (2 have left the Council within this period)	5
Welsh Enghancing (internal)	The Learning Centre, since January 2018 to present	32
Intense residential course (week)	Nant Gwrtheyrn, November 2017	1
1:1 learning / Welsh enhancing	1:1 consultation or tutorial sessions are available at every level and are arranged with the Learning and Development Office (Welsh Language) upon individual's request. These sessions vary extensively according to individuals' needs, from learning the basics of the Welsh language to proofreading a piece of work or giving guidance on certain apects of a particular part of language.	16
1:1 learning / Welsh enhancing sessions with an external tutor	These depend of the individual. Skype is used by one at present. April-August 2018.	4
Summer school (July 2018)	A week in July 2018 at Bangor University / Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, Pwllheli	1
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Where are the recipients of supports and training?

Department	Learners (Advanced Entry)	Ehancing
Adults, Health and Well-being	24	4
Concultancy	12	1
Children and Supporting Familes	2	11
Trunk Roads (NMWTRA)	4	0
Education	3	2
Environment	2	0
Finance	1	0
Economy and Community	2	6
Highways and Municipal	0	1
Corporate Support	0	5
Total	***50***	***30***

Current applications for training: 14

14 individuals have applied for language training (at various levels), and either line managers have received the applications for their seal of approval or they have been forwarded to the external providers to secure places on the courses.

28 individuals have applied for their place on the internal Welsh Grammar course between now and September.

Development:

Developing new courses

In January 2018 two new courses were introduced following research conducted by distributing questionnaires (that were completed by 190 members of staff) between October and December 2017. One of these courses is Treiglo (Mutation) which has been offered in the past and despite positive feedback had not been provided internally for a few years. The second course is a new

concept, Elementary Welsh, established due to popuar staff demand. This course is coming into its own and is appropriate for teams eager to co-enhance their Welsh.

Developing Written Welsh, a new course, was also established following a manager's application which was introduced to the team in question in February. Another manager has also applied for the same course, and said course will be arranged in the foreseeable future.

Undoubtedly, the work ongoing on determining staff language skills in relation to the minimum standards designated for posts will highlight further requirements for spoken and written Welsh in the near future. See more on the this project below.

Agreement

In order to aid and formalize arrangements between the Council, the individual and the external provider and attempting to reduce the number of those who either give up or fail to attend sessions, the Language Training Agreement was introduced and signed by the Learning and Development Service, the individual and the line manager. This agreement resembles Learning and Development Service's general training agreement, but has been adapted to reflect the linguistic requirements and to contain the individual's assessment procedure against the job's language designation.

Language Designations (and the Language Framework)

Before retiring, the Welsh Co-ordinator developed a new Language Framework, and by now line managers across the Council have denoted minimum language standards for all jobs within their services by using that particular Language Framework.

Their next step will be recognizing the staff's language skills according to the framework and, in the instance of any disrepancy between the job's language designation and the individual's skills level, the individual will be refered to the Learning and Development Office for further support and training.

As an example of good practice, Gwynedd Consultancy has flown through the process and an arrangement is now in place for those who were recognized to receive language training.

Discussions are underway with the Leisure services offering their members of staff support within leisure centres in the near future, and the Learning and Development Office (Welsh Language) will pay the other depertments a visits in their turn.

Dafydd Orwig Memorial Prize 2017 – 2018

Historically, this prize is presented as part of the Cyngor ar ei Orau (Council at its Best) ceremony to reward Welsh learners for their effort in learning the language. Last year, the award recognized individuals who promoted and encouraged the Welsh language and who lead by example.

However, this year, it was decided that two individuals were to be recognized and therefore two awards were awared for the first time, for Using Welsh within the Workplace and the Encouraging and Promoting Welsh within the Workplace.

This year's winners were:

Using Work within the Workplace Award: David Birdsall – Social Worker in the Youth Justice Service (Economy and Community)

Encourage and Promoting Welsh within the Workplace Award: Nia Jane Owen-Midwodd – Personal Assistant to the Head of Concultancy Department (Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy)

5. Reporting on language requirements on appointing

REPORT ACCORDING TO STANDARD 170 REQUIREMENT –

(ch) the number of new and vacant jobs advertised and categorised requiring –
(i) that Welsh language ability is essential
(ii) that the appointee is expected to obtain certain Welsh skills upon accepting the job
(iii) that Welsh ability is desirable, or
(iv) that Welsh ability is not essential (based upon the minutes kept in keeping with standard 154);

Welsh language ability is essential	**481**
The appointee is expected to obtain certain Welsh skills upon accepting the job	**0**
Welsh ability is desirable	**0**
Welsh ability is not essential	**0**

6. Reporting on Language Complaints

A REPORT IN KEEPING WITH STANDARD 170 REQUIREMENTS –

(d) number of complaints received

Two inquiries into alleged failures to adhere to the Standards were conducted by the Language Commissioner during 2017-18

CSG127 Inquiry

This inquiry involves the Council's failure to co-operate with two Standards in its provision of swimming lessons at its leisure centres.

Standard 81
All Welsh services provided by you must be promoted and the advertising of that service must be in Welsh.
Standard 84
In the case of offering the public an educational course, you must offer it in Welsh.

On **25 July 2017** a final decision by the Welsh Language Commisioner stated that the Commisioner was satisfied that the Council had complied with Standard 84, but unsatisfied with its compliance to Standard 81. This was based upon our failure to note that swimming lessons are being held in Welsh by promoting and advertising the swimming lessons, at present.

Other enquiries and inquiries by the Commissioner:

An enquiry was received regarding a work agreement between the Council and an external provider following a complaint from a member of the public that a job was being advertised exclusively in

English. The Commissioner agreed that the Council is dealing with the matter and that no further investigation was required.

A complaint was received regarding the Council's appealing process in **July 2017**. We are still awaiting the Commissioner's decision regarding this case.

Number of direct complaints received through the Council's complaints process:

Department	Number of Complaints
Corporate Support	2

Both the above complaints against the Council's Language Policy entails its recruiting policy and the need for Welsh skills in order to apply for jobs.

Developmental Work:

We have established a project entitled “Cymraeg yn y Gweithle” (“Welsh within the Workplace”) which looks thematically at different aspects of compliance and looks into new means of developing the Council’s ability to proactively provide linguistic options and to encourage more members of the public to use our Welsh language services.

We have been focusing mainly on the work of setting minimum language standards for all jobs, and will be also looking at other the thematic fields including the use of language while developing online services and using apps.

During 2017-18, attention was also given to setting the strategic direction of promoting the Welsh language in Gwynedd over the next five years. As well as developing the strategic document on promoting Welsh in keeping with the Standard’s requirements, it also developed the Council’s Plan – a document noting the Council’s strategic direction in its entirety over the next few years – and Gwynedd and Angelsey’s Well-being Plan that centres Welsh within all its plans.

Assessing Language Skills (Standards 136-137)

During this year, we have worked on the development of the language skills project with the Human Resources and Learning and Development department. This new arrangement regarding appointing the essential language skills required to designate a job, every department within the Council has looked at the minimum language standards for every job within their current structures.

This work’s next step, which is about to commence, is co-operating with departments to recognize the language levels of individuals within those jobs in order to evaluate whether or not they comply with the language requirements listed for the job. Following this, the managers will work with the Language Learning and Development Officer to determine the need for training, and to refer the officers to the appropriate training.

The number of staff lacking any Welsh abilities is scarce and therefore it is unlikely that this work result in a pike in the need of Welsh learning classes, but more demand of different training, such as enhancing the Welsh language or developing written skills, is a possibilty. This demand has already manifested, and has lead to change in the Learning and Development’s team training provision.

Promoting Standards:

During 2017-18, the Council has developed a new strategy for promoting the Welsh language in Gwynedd. This plan succeeds the previous county strategy that was lead by Hunaniaith and looks specifically at discovering opportunities to increase the use of Welsh among the residents. A final draft and the first year implementation plan will be developed over summer 2018, and will be implemented towards the end of the year.