

Report

Cabinet

Part 1

Date: 17 July 2024

Subject Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2023 - 24

Purpose This annual monitoring report sets out Newport City Council's progress against its Welsh language commitments during the financial year 2023-2024.

The attached monitoring report is required to be published on the Council's website in accordance with statutory responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards.

Author Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate

Ward All

Summary The Council is required to report annually on its progress in complying with the Welsh Language Standards, which are a set of standards laid down by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. This report covers the eighth year of implementation, following the imposition of the Council's Welsh language standards in March 2016.

The report provides an overview of the Council's progress in meeting the Welsh Language Standards, includes information required by law to be published on an annual basis, a summary of key achievements during the year, and priority areas for future work.

Proposal To approve and recommend the attached monitoring report to Full Council

Action by Corporate Management Team

Timetable Immediate

To meet statutory requirements under the Welsh Language Standards the draft Welsh Language Monitoring Report was published on the Council's website by the 30th of June 2024 and will be updated following Council by the end of July.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Welsh Language Implementation Group (staff group)
- Head of People, Policy, and Transformation
- Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate
- Corporate Management Team
- Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Signed

Background

Legal context

This annual report represents the Council's eighth year of implementing the Welsh Language Standards which came into force on the 30th of March 2016. It has been prepared in accordance with Welsh Language Standards 158, 164 and 170, and sets out how Newport City Council has complied with the Welsh Language Standards imposed on the authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner, set out in [Newport City Council's Compliance Notice](#).

As well as outlining the authority's general compliance, this report contains the specific information required by the Standards to be published annually. This includes data on the number of complaints we have received, the Welsh language levels of our staff, the training we offer through the medium of Welsh, and the level of Welsh language competence we require from new staff applying for posts which have advertised during this financial year.

Governance

The implementation of, and compliance with, Welsh Language Standards is supported by the Council's Welsh Language Implementation Group, chaired by the Strategic Director for Corporate and Transformation. Newport City Council has an Elected Member Welsh Language Champion, and Welsh Language is part of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction portfolio.

Developments

This annual report reflects the positive work undertaken by the Council, in another challenging year which impacted on the delivery of our Welsh language priorities – particularly where they depended on community engagement and outreach. Highlights this year include:

- **Cymraeg Gwaith Initiative** – Dedicated seconded tutor to facilitate NCC Welsh language training in partnership with Coleg Gwent funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The initial agreement, which commenced in Autumn 2023, was for 12 months with the opportunity to review and extend if successful.
- **Training** - There has been a significant increase in the level of attendees at the Welsh language awareness courses, with 70.7% more of the workforce participating in the training than the previous year. Bespoke sessions during this financial year have included sessions for the Customer Services department and the Democratic and Electoral Services team.
- **Staff Welsh Language Skills** - Overall, 29.45% of the workforce have Welsh Language skills ranging from entry level to a proficiency in the language. Of the workforce who have responded to the self-assessment, 7.90% have foundation level to advanced skills speaking the Welsh language, which is higher than the figure of Welsh spoken in the city of Newport according to the 2021 census (7.5%).
- **New Website, Welsh Language Domain, and Email addresses** – First fully bilingual website using the DrupalGov platform, supported by a new Welsh language domain of www.casnewydd.gov.uk alongside translation of all council emails linking addresses to @casnewydd.gov.uk.
- **Many Faces of Welshness Campaign** – Worked with Urban Circle to produce video resources highlighting and celebrating the diverse nature of Newport's Welsh language community and why Welsh is important to the people of Newport, how it is used and outside of the school environment and what options there are for parents and children considering a Welsh medium education.
- **Welsh Language Promotional Activities** – Facilitated and supported a wide range of activities during the year to promote the Welsh language, bilingual education, and Welsh language

employment opportunities including a St David’s Day school musical event, the Gŵyl Newydd Welsh Language festival, and other city events including Maindee festival.

- **Welsh Language Translation Officer** - Following a successful recruitment campaign in autumn 2023, an inhouse Welsh language translator is in post and a new draft triage process is being developed to introduce a more effective and efficient translation service. Collaborating with our digital teams this officer supported a proof-of-concept project trialling the use of an automated translation solution, assessing the potential to implement across the organisation.

The report also identifies priorities for the next reporting period, including:

- An increased focus on recruitment, retention, and development of Welsh speakers across all service areas within the Council
- Facilitating and supporting events throughout the year and looking at the cross-cutting themes around equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Developing a Saint David’s day event to celebrate Welshness, Welsh culture and Welsh heritage that includes a city procession, an Eisteddfod-style competition that is open to all residents, local businesses and communities which will take place at the Riverfront Theatre in the city.
- The creation of a new suite of videos that promote Welsh medium education from nursery through to secondary school years.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

Newport City Council continues to invest in the Welsh language, with a Welsh Language and Equalities budget to support internal adoption of standards and facilitate partnership and community initiatives. The most significant expenditure is translation costs. Additional funding for short-term projects is available through a Welsh Language Reserve. There is an expectation that service areas will factor in costs associated with Welsh language provision when developing new services to ensure sustainability.

Risks

Risk Title / Description	Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s) What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?	Risk Owner Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the Annual Monitoring Report is not published	M	L	A draft report has been compiled and taken through relevant governance processes for approval	Head of People Policy and Transformation
That the Welsh Language (WL) Standards in their entirety are not implemented	H	M	Monitoring of compliance with WL Standards is supported by the WL Implementation Group.	Corporate Management Team Strategic Director of Transformation and Corporate
That employees do not understand the Standards	H	L	The WL Implementation group includes membership from all service areas. Regular communications are issued to all staff. Training on Welsh language awareness is delivered regularly with targeted training offered if employees do not understand	Head of People, Policy and Transformation

			standards. Information is available to all staff on the Welsh language intranet pages.	
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* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- [Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)
- [Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032](#)
- [Welsh Language Skills Policy](#)
- [Welsh Language 5-Year Promotional 2022 -2027](#)
- [People Plan 2023 - 28](#)

Options Available and considered

1. To approve the attached report and progress to Full Council
2. To request further information or not approve the attached report and redraft.

Preferred Option and Why

1. To approve the attached paper and progress to Full Council to ensure that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial consequences to the proposal to approve the monitoring report. Cost of the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards is met by service area budgets, and a central budget is also in place for translation costs, with a reserve available to draw on for additional projects or set up costs associated with compliance.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council’s legal duties are set out in the report, and it is recommended that the Cabinet approves and adopts the report appended to this report in order to ensure continued compliance with the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards.

Comments of Head of People, Policy, and Transformation

This annual report reflects the positive progress made over the past 12 months and highlights some examples of good practice, while also identifying some areas we aim to improve in the next reporting period.

The continued delivery of the 5-Year Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and work within this area aligns with the Council’s Corporate Plan 2022-27 vision of ‘an ambitious, fairer, greener Newport for everyone’, and supports its four Well-being Objectives.

This work also supports the council’s new [People Plan](#) 2023-2028 through the Representation and Transformation Strategic Theme.

The principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its five ways of working have been fully considered, with engagement of citizens and other key stakeholders in drafting this report. This also integrates with the Well-being Goals especially ‘A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language’ ensuring compliance with the Standards over the long-term.

A Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment was completed on the Welsh Language 5-Year Promotional Strategy 2022-27, to which this report relates to, meaning an FEIA wasn't required for this annual report. There are no staffing or HR related issues arising directly from this report.

Scrutiny Committees

The Welsh Language Annual Report 23/24 was presented to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 7 June 2024.

The full details will be published in the minutes of the Committee meeting on the Council's democracy pages. The following issues were discussed:

The committee thanked Officers for their work and agreed that the report accurately reflected the Council's Welsh Language performance over the period and demonstrated the continued commitment to the Welsh language and areas of challenge, success, and development. A summary of comments and responses is outlined below.

- The Committee recommended to clarify that the mini-Eisteddfod planned for next year is a discrete Newport event, separate from the Urdd Eisteddfod, and to explain the purpose and benefits of this initiative for the Welsh language community and education in Newport.
This has been clarified in the report.
- The Committee recommended to include more information on the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the uptake of Welsh medium education by different groups of pupils, such as the percentage of pupils from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and abilities who access Welsh medium education, and the challenges and opportunities to increase this uptake.
The WESP annual report will be presented to the People Scrutiny Committee in the Autumn and will contain information on update of Welsh medium education across the city.
- The Committee advised to check the links in the report work in PDF format and to provide alternative sources of information if the links are not accessible or reliable.

All links in PDF document have been checked and all work in this document format.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

This report assesses progress made by Newport City Council under Welsh Language Standards in line with associated actions in the Welsh Language 5-Year Promotional Strategy 2022 - 2027.

A full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) was undertaken on the Welsh Language 5-Year Promotional Strategy 2022 - 2027, to which this Annual Report relates. This FEIA considers our legislative responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010), including the Socio-economic Duty, the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011). Therefore, no FEIA has been completed for this annual report.

Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

In terms of the Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act and consideration of the sustainable development principle, five ways of working:

Long Term – Activities in relation to delivery of compliance with the Standards contained within the Compliance Notice and the 5 Year Strategy will help deliver a Wales of, “vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.”.

Preventative – The report covers the work undertaken with the Right Skills Board, stakeholders, and partners to raise awareness of the Welsh language across all of Newport's diverse communities. The key themes and actions in the report underpin them and balance short term needs with the delivery of medium to long-term solutions.

Integration – It identifies key successes and challenges for the Welsh language in Newport and shows how the council has worked towards compliance with the Welsh language standards and promoted Welsh across the diverse communities of Newport increasing the visibility of the language across the city.

Involvement – Engagement of citizens and other key stakeholders in the drafting of this report and the associated policies is demonstrated through this report.

Collaboration - The actions in the report have and are being undertaken in collaboration with partners from the Council's Right Skills Board and Welsh Language Implementation Group and partners within each service area. The collaborative work enables the Council to share resources and build expertise and knowledge.

Consultation

Not Applicable

Background Papers

[Newport's Welsh Language Standards](#)

[Newport's Implementation Plan](#)

[Welsh Language 5-Year Promotional 2022 -27](#)

[Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-32](#)

[Welsh Language Skills Policy](#)

[Corporate Plan 2022-27](#)

[People Plan 2023 - 28](#)

[The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)

[Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

[Socio-economic Duty Guidance](#)

Dated: 10 July 2024