



## **FULL COUNCIL - INFORMATION REPORT**

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Date Written      | 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2022* |
| Report Author     | Matthew Rivers            |
| Service Area      | Welsh Language            |
| Exempt/Non Exempt | Non Exempt                |
| Committee Date    | 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2022 |

*To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Welsh Language Annual Report 2021-2022**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council received its final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This outlined the Council's duty to meet the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 1.2 The Standards require the Council to compile an Annual Report by 30<sup>th</sup> June of each year that deals with the way that it has complied with the Service Delivery, Policy Making and Operational Standards. Provision is also included within the Standards concerning publishing and publicity of the Annual Report.
- 1.3 The Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report, attached as Appendix 1, reports upon the good progress that the Council continues to make towards complying with the Standards during financial year 2021-2022.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 sets out the Council's Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan.

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council received its final Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This outlined the Council's duty to meet the statutory Welsh Language Standards established by the Welsh Government under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

- 2.2 This Measure gave equal status to Welsh and English so that Welsh cannot be treated less favourably than English. The introduction of the Standards is designed to ensure that those in Wales who wish to live their lives in Welsh can do by obliging Councils, and other public sector bodies, to deliver their services in Welsh.

### **Annual Reporting**

- 2.3 The Welsh Language Standards require the Council to compile an Annual Report, in relation to each financial year, that deals with the way that it has complied with the Service Delivery, Policy Making and Operational Standards. Provision is also included within the Standards concerning publishing and publicity of the Annual Report.

## **3.0 WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR 2021-2022**

- 3.1 The Council's Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for 2021-2022 attached as Appendix 1, reports upon the Council's progress towards complying with the Standards during financial year 2021-2022.
- 3.2 The Annual Report reports compliance towards the Standards that it is subject to by highlighting:
- Any investigations received from the Welsh Language Commissioner.
  - Information about complaints, Welsh skills of employees and Welsh language training.
  - The Welsh language activities planned/currently being undertaken across the Council, some of which are summarised below.
- 3.3 There were no complaints leading to the formal complaint's procedure in 2021-2022.
- 3.4 The Welsh Language Commissioner undertook a mystery shopper exercise in 2021-2022. The report produced following the exercise highlighted areas for improvement. These areas focused on how we address our residents through Welsh and the need to publish the final version of our Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan (Appendix 2 of this report). An action plan is in place to address the issues and demonstrate how we are improving.

### **Welsh Language Programme**

The Council has developed a Welsh Language Programme structured around compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, translation and promotion of the Welsh language; it is made up of the following:

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Telephone and Reception | #Shwmaeronment Campaign    |
| Correspondence          | Mystery Shopper Exercise   |
| Social Media            | Welsh Language Translation |

|                         |                                 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Website                 | Welsh Language Annual Reporting |
| Welsh Language Training |                                 |

The Welsh Language Programme forms part of the Council's Corporate Services work programme, supporting compliance with the Standards and delivery of the:

- Well-being Goal: A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
- Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and Welsh Government's Million Welsh Speakers Strategy



### Assessing Impact

The annual report (Appendix 1) explains how impacts are assessed as part of the Council's decision-making process. It also shows how this is integrated, for example in our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) document that forms part of all our Cabinet and Council reports.

The Council has strengthened its governance and planning as part of its Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan. This has meant that our Welsh language strategies and plans are front and centre of our Corporate Well-being Plan and Self-Assessment reporting.

### Implementing 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy and the Welsh Education Strategic Plan

The annual report shows the good work that we have achieved during a challenging time, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Programmes have continued but we have embraced new ways of working to allow us to do this. For example, we have used digital technology to hold key events and ensure we continue to promote the Welsh language and culture.

Programmes include:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Urdd Eisteddfod T                               | Adult Community Learning - Welsh Language |
| Being Bilingual Booklet                         | Welsh Word / Phase of the Fortnight       |
| Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae                           | Working Skills for Adults 2               |
| Welsh Language Carol Concert                    | Welsh Speaking Volunteers                 |
| #SHWMAERONMENT Event                            | Welsh Language Coffee Morning             |
| Integrated Children's Centre                    | Welsh Language Champions Group            |
| Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg / Learn Welsh Glamorgan | Welsh Online 10 Hour Course               |

The new Welsh Language Strategy was agreed at Council at the beginning of the year and has several objectives, this is a 5-year strategy 2022-2027. The strategy will be published in June 2022. We have, and will continue to, build this into our strategy development and working practices.

The Council has made a commitment that all new employees entering a role with the Council will undertake 'Work Welsh introductory Course' this is a 10-hour online course which introduces staff to days of the week, greetings etc. so far 115 new starters have completed the course since April 2021.

### **Meetings**

It is now general practice to open all Council meetings in Welsh and the use of the Welsh language in all forms is encouraged by Senior Managers and Councillors alike.

The Council is an active member of Grŵp Deddf and regularly attends their meetings. Grŵp Deddf is a voluntary group consisting of Welsh Language Officers for public sector bodies who come under the compliance requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The aim of Grŵp Deddf is to discuss and share information and good practice on Welsh language.

### **Partnership Working**

As part of the project there are partnerships in place with the following key stakeholders to provide opportunities to support and develop the Welsh language:

- Menter Iaith Merthyr Tudful
- Urdd
- Welsh and English medium schools in Merthyr Tydfil
- Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun
- Central South Consortium
- The Youth Service
- The College Merthyr Tydfil
- Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
- Adult Community Learning



Collaboration



Involvement

Going forward the Council is working with local businesses to promote the use of Welsh.

### **Standards**

The Annual report updates on how we are meeting the Welsh Language Standards, providing data in meeting our requirements. Appendix 2 sets out the Council's Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan.

### **Capacity**

The Council has undertaken exercises to strengthen its capacity. This has meant that a role has been developed to develop and deliver Welsh language strategy with another role being put in place to focus on compliance as well as supporting development and delivery of strategy.

## Summary of findings

The findings of our Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for 2021-2022 (Appendix 2) are:

- There is an improvement in how the Council records and reports its data. This will support us in better understanding our staff needs.
- Increase of 11% (from 108 in 2020-21 to 120 in 2021-22) of staff that feel that they have the listening skills to hold all work conversations in Welsh. This is 7% of those that provided data. However, this is a lower percentage of the overall sample size compared to 2020-21.
- Increase of 15% (from 103 in 2020-21 to 118 in 2021-22) of staff that feel that they have the reading skills to read all work materials in Welsh. This is 7% of those that provided data. However, this is a lower percentage of the overall sample size compared to 2020-21.
- Increase of 12% (from 104 in 2020-21 to 116 in 2021-22) of staff that feel that they have the speaking skills to hold work conversations fluent in Welsh. This is 7% of those that provided data. However, this is a lower percentage of the overall sample size compared to 2020-21.
- Increase of 13% (from 86 in 2020-21 to 97 in 2021-22) of staff that feel that they have the writing skills to do complex work in Welsh. This is 6% of those that provided data. However, this is a lower percentage of the overall sample size compared to 2020-21.
- To continue to improve, the Council has developed its Welsh Language Standards Implementation plan (Appendix 2).
- Since the beginning of April 2021, 115 members of staff have completed the online basic Welsh language course.
- Over 30 members of front-line staff have received Welsh language telephone and greeting refresher training, which has included staff from the Council's Contact Centre and reception areas.
- 6 learners sat their oral intermediate exam in June 2021, all 6 learners successfully completed the exam (Welsh in the workplace ranging from Entry level to Intermediate level 1 and 2).
- The Council currently has 58 members of staff learning Welsh in the workplace ranging from Entry level to Intermediate level 1 and 2. This has increased from 14 reported in 2020-21.
- Out of 403 jobs advertised, 8 had Welsh as essential and 395 as desirable. This has increased compared to 2020-21, where of the 167 jobs advertised zero of them had Welsh essential.

## 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific financial implications identified in this report. Any financial implications arising from projects/initiatives in this report will be presented to Cabinet/Council as appropriate, including potential options for funding.

## 5.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1

|   | Positive Impacts  | Negative Impacts            | Neutral/Not Applicable |                               |
|---|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>  | 4 of 4  | 0 of 4                      | 0 of 4                 |                               |
| <b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul> | 5 of 5  | 0 of 5                      | 0 of 5                 |                               |
| <b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> (including Welsh Language)  | 2 of 10   | 0 of 10                     | 8 of 10                |                               |
| <b>4. Socio-economic Disadvantage</b>   | 0 of 6  | 0 of 6                      | 6 of 6                 |                               |
| <b>5. Consultation and Engagement</b>   | <b>Undertaken</b>   | <b>Due to be Undertaken</b> | <b>Not Required</b>    |                               |
|   | 0 of 1  | 0 of 1                      | 1 of 1                 |                               |
| <b>6. Data and Evidence to inform the proposal</b>  | <b>Yes</b>  |                             | <b>No</b>              |                               |
|   | 1 of 1  |                             | 0 of 1                 |                               |
| <b>7. Biodiversity and the resilience of Ecosystems</b>   | <b>Maintained</b>   | <b>Enhanced</b>             | <b>Reduced</b>         | <b>Neutral/Not Applicable</b> |
|   | 0 of 1  | 0 of 1                      | 0 of 1                 | 1 of 1                        |
| <b>Summary</b>  |   |                             |                        |                               |
| <b>The main positive impacts are:</b>   | <p>The Council's Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for 2019-2020 positively impacts on the Council's Well-being Objectives, sustainable development principles, Welsh language and the protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Annual Report demonstrates the good progress that the Council continues to make towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complying with the Welsh Language Standards; and</li> <li>• Delivering the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and Welsh Language Vision for Merthyr Tydfil which is a place that promotes the use of the Welsh language and treats the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality.</li> </ul> |                             |                        |                               |

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>The main negative impacts are:</b> | No negative impacts have been identified. |
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**ELLIS COOPER  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW BARRY  
CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE  
AND RESOURCES**

| <b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>   |                         |                          |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Title of Document(s)</b>  | <b>Document(s) Date</b> | <b>Document Location</b> |
|  |                         |                          |
| <b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b> |                         | No                       |

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***