

# Panel Ymgynghorol yr Iaith Gymraeg

## Welsh Language Advisory Panel

21 September 2017 at 1:30pm  
Democratic Services' Unit Committee Room, County Hall

### MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

**In attendance:**

Name:		Group / Post:
Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths	PHG	Plaid Cymru (Chair)
Cllr. Carys Jones	CJ	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Dorian Williams	DW	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. John Prosser	JP	Labour
Cllr. Alun Lenny	AL	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Tina Higgins	TH	Labour
Cllr. Sue Allen	SA	Independent
Cllr. Edward Thomas	ET	Independent
<b>Officers</b>		
Llinos Evans	LLE	Policy and Partnership Officer
Gwyneth Ayers	GA	Policy and Partnership Manager
Myfanwy Jones	MJ	Welsh Language Policy Officer
Bethan James	BJ	Welsh Language Development Officer

Item number	Text and action points:	Responsible:
1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> Everyone was welcomed to the meeting by Councillor Peter Hughes-Griffiths and a special welcome was given to new members. Apologies were received from Councillor Joseph Davies and it was explained to the Members that a third member of the Labour Group will be confirmed at the next Executive Board.	
2.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were correct. It was noted that Kelly Morris has been appointed to the new post of Welsh Language Learning and Development Consultant within the Learning and Development Team.	
3.	<b>A short presentation on the Panel's work until now</b>	

LIE drew attention to the census results stating that Carmarthenshire had experienced the largest decline across Wales, a decrease of 6.4% (a decrease of 6,148 speakers) in a decade. For the first time in the history of Carmarthenshire the percentage of Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire has fallen under half (43.9%).

It was noted that there is no ward in Carmarthenshire remaining where over 70% of its population speak Welsh, which is the percentage of language viability. The pattern of reduction can be seen across the county, but it appears that the highest decline was seen in Amman Valley area between 2001 a 2011.

The number of people who have indicated that they can understand Welsh, but who can't speak has increased to 20,716. Carmarthenshire has the potential to encourage those who can understand, and build their confidence in the language.

Following the publication of the 2011 Census, the Council unanimously agreed to establish a specific working group to look at the position of the Welsh language and in particular on the cause of the decline. Dr Dylan Phillips was commissioned to carry out detailed research work on the data and he provided a full report that can be found on the Council's website. Dr Dylan Phillips prepared a specific statistical report for each area of the Mentrau Iaith in order to support them with planning their work locally. The research confirmed there is a need to plan at a very local level in terms of the Welsh language as the reasons for the decline differs by area within the county. The lack of language transmission within the family is a challenge in Carmarthen town and Ammanford town, but the influx of older people and the outward migration of indigenous young people is the challenge in rural areas such as Cynwyl Gaeo.

The working group came to a decision on 7 specific themes and invited organisations and associations to present evidence to the working group. The 7 themes were Education, Planning, The language and the economy, Workplaces and Council administration; Organisations that work for the benefit of the Welsh language; Welsh language transmission in the family; and marketing the language. 73 recommendations were agreed upon and were agreed at full council on April 2014. The working group's report 'The Welsh language in Carmarthenshire' can be found on the council's website but the recommendations are now part of the Panel's work. There will be an opportunity for the Members through the Panel's work to look further at the developments and ensure that progress is still being made.

The policy work is now led by the Welsh language Measure (Wales) 2011 which gives the Welsh language an official status in Wales. The Measure sets a new framework which is the Language Standards which replace the Welsh Language Scheme. The Council received its Standards in September 2015 with the expectation to that Council would comply with most of the Standards by 30 March 2016 and others by the end of September 2016.

The Standards are organized under 5 class of standards which are service delivery; policy making; operational; promotion; and record keeping. Attention was drawn to the requirements of each class of standard. A lot of raising awareness has taken place with Council staff in order to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities.

The policy team has produced Guidelines and has sent them to all staff by e-mail, have issued paper copies to give to non-office based staff and publish them

	<p>on the council's intranet. An example was circulated to the Members. The feedback regarding the guidelines have been positive and after publishing them the departments have been contacting the policy team to ask for advice and support. It has been useful for the team to meet a number of staff and to remind staff of the new policy. There is a need to continue to assist and work with staff to ensure compliance.</p> <p>LIE mentioned the council's action plan that is reviewed annually with specific actions together with the annual report.</p> <p>LIE referred to other policy documents including the policy on internal use of the Welsh language and noted that there is a broad training programme available to staff. The 'More than just words' Strategic Framework, which is the Welsh Government's Welsh Language policy in Health and Social Care, is a framework which the Communities department are leading on but with the support of the policy team.</p> <p>LIE mentioned the committees that exist to monitor the progress made regarding the Welsh language.</p> <p>Ways of monitoring all work relating to the Welsh language was discussed and attention was drawn to the work undertaken by the County Strategic Forum and the internal committees but that more work was needed on this.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>BJ noted the aims and objectives of the previous Advisory Panel and changes were introduced for the next term regarding the Welsh Language Standards and the County Strategic Forum.</p> <p>Reference was made to the fact that 3 members of each political group were part of the Panel and that the Executive Board member with responsibility for the Welsh Language will chair.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Welsh Government Strategy: Cymraeg 2050 ~ A million Welsh speakers'</b></p> <p>BJ outlined the context regarding the Welsh Government's strategy and its ambition to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using Welsh reach a million by 2050.</p> <p>The strategy focuses on Education and sets specific targets for the number of children and young people receiving Welsh medium education. It also refers to the importance of encouraging Welsh learners and the support available through the National Centre.</p> <p>The Strategy recognises the key contribution of language transmission in the home to the future vitality of the Welsh.</p> <p>The Strategy refers to three themes with relevant headings under each theme.</p> <p><b><u>Theme 1 – Increasing the number of Welsh speakers</u></b></p> <p><b>Language transmission in the family</b></p>	

**The early years** – increase in the early years provision, i.e. meithrin (nursery) groups

**Statutory education** – the challenge for local authorities will be to reconfigure provision in order to create more Welsh medium places and over time ensure that more bilingual schools introduce a higher proportion of the curriculum in Welsh.

Expectations to develop Access points for Welsh medium provision to those accessing at a later stage.

**Post-compulsory education** – Growing need for a bilingual workforce therefore post-compulsory education and training providers have a key role to play. It notes that the sector must ‘change gear’!

Welsh for Adults. Notes that structural changes have taken place. Time now to develop the provision at a National level to support courses for the workplace, the family and opportunities to use technology more effectively in support of learning.

**The education workforce, resources and qualifications** – Need to increase capacity, primary and secondary school teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh. More Welsh medium resources are needed.

### **Theme 2 – Increasing the use of Welsh**

**The workplace** – increase the use of Welsh within the workplace across all sectors

**Services** – increase the range of Services offered to Welsh speakers, and an increase in use of Welsh language services.

**Social use of Welsh** – embed positive language use practices supported by formal and informal opportunities to use Welsh socially.

### **Theme 3 – Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context (i.e. without barriers)**

In order to support the two themes of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and enable the language to be used, the strategy discusses the changes needed to be seen over the next three decades under the following headings:

Community and economy; Culture and media; Wales and the wider world; Digital technology; Language infrastructure; Language planning; Evaluation and research.

Therefore to summarize, this is a long term strategy which places a substantial and ambitious challenge.

<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Welsh Government – White Paper Consultation Document: Proposals for a Welsh Language Bill</b></p> <p>The White paper ‘Striking the right balance: proposals for a Welsh Language Bil’ was published on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, and the closing date for receiving comments is 27 October. The White Paper is one of the ways the Welsh Government is consulting on proposals to make new laws in relation to the Welsh language.</p> <p>In the Programme for Government, Taking Wales Forward, the Welsh Government has made a commitment to review its legislation regarding the Welsh language. There is a need to do this in order to ensure that the law is up to date and supports the ambition to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050.</p> <p>A summary was given of the main proposals in the paper. The White Paper provides the logic behind those proposals, the main issues and the options considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single body should be established to be the main body with responsibility for promoting the Welsh language and monitoring and enforcing compliance with Standards.</li> <li>• That single body should be a Welsh Language Commission and therefore the Welsh Language Commissioner should be abolished.</li> <li>• The Welsh Government should be responsible for national Welsh language strategy, national policy, for managing and funding some bodies of national significance, and for some specified areas of work. The Welsh Government should transfer the budget and resources for other specified promotion work it currently undertakes to the Welsh Language Commission.</li> <li>• The concept of Welsh Language Standards should be retained but Standards should only apply to services. Other corporate duties currently in the Standards system which do not create enforceable rights for individuals, should be termed ‘language planning duties’ and should be statutory duties on bodies on the face of the legislation.</li> <li>• The Standards bodies are required to comply with should be reviewed from time to time and, where appropriate, additional Standards placed on bodies or current exceptions granted to the bodies removed.</li> <li>• The Welsh Government should be responsible for making and imposing Standards on bodies, and for issuing guidance and codes of practice. The Commission should be responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Standards.</li> <li>• Bodies should be required to deal with complaints about the Standards in the first instance. The Commission should only investigate complaints in serious cases.</li> <li>• The Welsh Language Tribunal should be retained. Bodies should be able to appeal against the imposition of a Standard on them by the Welsh Government to the Tribunal.</li> <li>• The Standards should be capable of being applied to any body, so long as the requirements are reasonable and proportionate and within the powers of the National Assembly for Wales.</li> </ul>	
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	It was agreed to prepare a draft response by 9th October. Members were asked to return any comments before or after reading the draft response. Councillor Peter Hughes-Griffiths will agree on the final response by 31 October.	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Action plan for Promoting the Welsh Language Strategy</b></p> <p>The Promotion Strategy was derived from the Standards, which is a language planning document or tool for Carmarthenshire. The Promotion Strategy was created between March and September 2016 through the Advisory Panel and the County Strategic Forum. The long term vision of the Strategy is to aim to make the Welsh language the main language of the county.</p> <p>The aims were listed with respect to skills acquisition, increasing confidence and use of the Welsh language, having a positive impact on population shifts, targets for geographical area and marketing and promoting the language.</p> <p>Since publishing the Strategy, further mapping has taken place and the Forum has been experimenting with methods of measuring impact and spreading good news messages.</p> <p>The Promotion Strategy contains a number of the recommendations in the Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire report except those relevant to education as those are included in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that the action points need to be updated following the meeting with relevant officers within the Council and needs to be discussed in the County Strategic Forum.</p> <p>It was stated that the County Strategic Forum will review the Promotion Strategy in March 2018, and the Standards states that the Council must report on the Promotion Strategy every five years therefore it will be included in the annual report in 2021.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>Reference was made to the importance of the messages within 'Being bilingual...' leaflet which promotes the advantages of being bilingual.</p> <p>Members discussed the new school in Penrhos, Glanymor and it was agreed to discuss the circulation of the document in this specific area, with colleagues from Education.</p> <p>It was agreed to send the presentations to the Councillors.</p> <p>The importance of promoting Welsh medium education to parents was noted as well as vocational education and activities outside school for example Young Farmers, Urdd and swimming lessons.</p>	<p>MJ</p> <p>BJ</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>11 December 2017</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was agreed to invite Kelly Morris, Learning and Development Advisor for the Welsh Language to give an update about developing the language skills of the workforce.</li></ul>	BJ
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