

Panel Ymgynghorol yr Iaith Gymraeg

Welsh Language Advisory Panel

11 December 2017 at 1:30pm
Ystafell Arthur, Yr Atom, Carmarthen

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. Fozia Aktar	FA	Labour
Cllr. Sue Allen	SA	Independent
Cllr. Joseph Davies	JD	Independent
Officers		
Rhian Dawson	RD	Integrated Services Manager
Gwyneth Ayers	GA	Policy and Partnership Manager
Llinos Evans	LLE	Policy and Partnership Officer
Myfanwy Jones	MJ	Language Policy Officer
Bethan James	BJ	Welsh Language Promotion Officer

Item number	Text and action points:	Responsible:
1.	Welcome and Apologies Councillor Peter Hughes Griffiths welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Cllr. Fozia Aktar, the Labour group's third representative. It was explained that the meeting was being held <i>in Yr Atom</i> Welsh Centre, which was funded by Welsh Government to facilitate and promote the use of the Welsh language in Carmarthen town. Apologies were received from Cllr. Tina Higgins and Wendy Walters.	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting The members agreed that the minutes were correct.	

3.	<p>Appointment of Vice-Chairperson</p> <p>It was noted that the Panel, in accordance with the terms of reference, needed to appoint a Vice Chair.</p> <p>Councillor Edward Thomas was appointed as Vice Chairman.</p>	BJ
4.	<p>More than just words strategic framework - Rhian Dawson, Head of Integrated Services</p> <p>Rhian Dawson, was welcomed to the meeting. Rhian's remit within the County Council and Health Board is older people, social services and support when people leave hospital.</p> <p>Rhian is the Language Leader within the Department for communities and she is taking the lead on the implementation of the 'More than just Words' strategic framework. The framework aims to ensure that care providers provide services of the same standard in both Welsh and English.</p> <p>As part of the presentation, a video by Hywel Dda University Health Board was shown which explained how important it is to use people's first language in certain groups such as children, older people and people with mental health problems.</p> <p>Rhian outlined the detailed work that has been done in identifying staff language skills within social care. A detailed audit was conducted and there were 30% of staff on level 1, 18% on level 2, 9% on level 3, 7% on level 4 and 15% on level 5</p> <p>Further detailed work has been done on clients' records on the Care First system, with 444 of them able to speak Welsh (from 1227 client on the system). The crucial question in terms of language ability has been re-introduced now, to ensure a consistent and accurate picture.</p> <p>The Division has also been looking at the ratio of staff to service users and there has been a breakdown per Service Manager within the service. In addition, there was an opportunity to look at the results of a sample of staff (following the linguistic self-assessment), which found that 36% of people had under-assessed their language skills. The challenge therefore is to build confidence among the staff to use the Welsh language. It was agreed that we must look at new opportunities in the workplace in order to encourage a supportive culture within the Department; opportunities such as action plans and training, learning and development support and the Language Leaders project.</p> <p>Rhian commented that it is difficult to recruit staff with a high level of fluency in Welsh, and that they need to work with neighbouring institutions to ensure Welsh language services to the most vulnerable communities.</p> <p>It was noted that <i>Dewis Sir Gâr</i> had received approval in the 'More than just words' national awards. This service, which cares for vulnerable clients, is completely bilingual. 92% of the service's customers have received the service in their chosen language.</p>	

	<p>Cllr. Lenny commented on the importance of linguistic considerations in dementia care and that older people who suffer from the condition can lose the acquisition of a second language. It was noted that good progress was being made but that there is concern that the framework is not being implemented consistently, as planned by the Government.</p> <p>There was a discussion about opportunities to match staff who have lower level Welsh language skills with staff who are fluent in order to foster confidence and initial ability in the language. A number of initiatives are in place within the Department to build on the existing skills and Rhian is keen to ensure that everyone reaches level 1.</p> <p>Cllr. Fozia Aktar drew attention to the fact that there were many people in her community who are interested to learn Welsh. It was agreed that information about provision would be shared and new opportunities in the area of Llwynhendy would be looked at.</p> <p>Cllr. Sue Allen explained that Dementia Friendly training has been arranged for her area. At present, none of the coaches can provide through the medium of Welsh but plans are in place to identify someone.</p> <p>We agreed on the importance of holding informal events such as <i>Paned a Chlonc</i> in order to foster the confidence of the people and provide them with informal opportunities to practice their Welsh. A cohort of people (approximately 20,000 people according to the 2011 Census) have some Welsh language skills but who lack the confidence to record formally.</p> <p>Rhian was thanked for her presentation.</p>	<p>Policy and partnership team</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Welsh Language Annual Report</p> <p>The annual report was presented in respect of the implementation of the standards for 2016-17. The preparation of the annual report is a statutory responsibility for the Council and the report will be published on the Council's website, following Executive Board approval.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the complaints received during the year and opportunities to promote the Welsh language through the County's markets. Members agreed on the importance of the private sector and noted that business development officers have been appointed by the Mentrau Iaith, through Welsh Government funding. There are two officers who will be working in Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>It was agreed that in the 2017-18 annual report the standards will be grouped together rather than detailed per standard.</p> <p>Approval of the annual report was agreed.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>The Promotion Strategy's Action Plan</p>	

	<p>Myfanwy Outlined the Promoting strategy Action plan by setting the context of the document. The promotion Strategy was prepared during 2016 and this document sets out the plans for implementation of that strategy.</p> <p>The document contains the recommendations of the 'The Welsh language in Carmarthenshire report' which was agreed by the full Council in April 2014. There has been an opportunity through this work to update the recommendations and meetings have been held with the responsible departments. The recommendations to do with education have been included in the Welsh language in Education Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The content of the document was discussed and gaps were identified under objective 3 in terms of mobility of people. There are a number of initiatives and policies implemented by the Council, such as the housing and planning policies.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the action plan highlights the need for joint planning to ensure the best use of resources.</p> <p>A discussion was had on the review of the local development plan and Cllr Alun Lenny noted that no planning applications have been received in the areas of linguistic importance (where 60% of the population speak Welsh) identified in the current scheme. Cllr. Lenny proposed that the Panel take part in the review of the Plan and that there was a need for serious consideration of the areas of linguistic importance and that there is potential in terms of the priority areas identified in the Promotion Strategy.</p> <p>There was a discussion on support for language learning and how the support is being offered. It was agreed that there is a need to adapt to situations such as the new school at Penrhos, Llanelli and we need to provide informal sessions in the community to support parents. An example was also given of the community of Abergorlech where 21 people are coming together to learn the language through Aberystwyth University.</p> <p>The County Strategic Forum will discuss the content of the document in January 2018.</p> <p>Members agreed on the contents of the document.</p>	<p>MJ</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>The Council's response to the Welsh Government's consultation 'Striking the right balance: proposals for the Welsh Bill'</p> <p>It was noted that the Council has prepared a response to the Welsh Government consultation on a bill for the Welsh language. The deadline was 31 October 2017.</p> <p>In the meantime, Eluned Morgan has been appointed Minister of the Welsh language and lifelong learning so we are awaiting the Government's response in terms of future plans.</p> <p>The policy and partnership team will send updates to Panel</p>	<p>Policy and partnership team</p>

