

Panel Ymgynghorol yr Iaith Gymraeg

Welsh Language Advisory Panel

Tuesday, 9 February 2016

2 o'clock

Democratic Services Unit Committee Room, County Hall, Carmarthen

MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

In attendance:

Name:		Group / Post:
Cllr. Mair Stephens	MS	Executive Board Member (Chair)
Cllr. Cefin Campbell	CC	Plaid Cymru (Vice-chair)
Cllr. Ryan Bartlett	RT	Labour
Cllr. Deryk Cundy	DC	Labour
Cllr. Peter Hughes Griffiths	PHG	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Gwyn Hopkins	GH	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Hugh Richards	HR	Independent
Cllr. Edward Thomas	ET	Independent
Officers		
Gwyneth Ayers	GA	Policy and Partnership Officer
Llinos Quelch	LIQ	Head of Planning
Ian Llewelyn	ILI	Forward Planning Manager
Matt Miller	MM	Housing Services Manager
Llinos Evans	LIE	Policy and Partnership Officer
Bethan James	BJ	Welsh Language Development Officer

Item	Text and action points:	Responsible :
1.	Welcome and Apologies Councillor Mair Stephens welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Councillor Calum Higgins, Councillor Joseph Davies, Wendy Walters a Myfanwy Jones.	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be correct. Reference was made to the meeting between Councillor Mair Stephens and Ian Jones to discuss swimming lessons and that it was being arranged.	

3.

Consultation on revisions to TAN 20

Llinos Quelch and Ian Llywelyn were welcomed to the meeting in order to discuss the Council's feedback to the proposed changes to Technical Advice Note 20. The officers' response will go to the Planning Committee and to the Executive Board before sending the response.

It was highlighted that there is a much stronger connection with the Welsh language when making planning decisions than in the past and it gives an idea on how to consider the Welsh language. Carmarthenshire County Council has been doing some of these things already.

The Council will note in its response that there is a role for a mediator or for councils to work together rather than every Local Authority implementing different assessments. The TAN 20 does not require assessments for developments that are already part of the LDP but rather on applications that were not foreseen. It was mentioned that some internal work will needed to be done in terms of the practicality of carrying out language impact assessments.

Reference was made to the original plan adopted by Council and that it was more robust, but the Council had to reduce its requirements due to the expectation of the Planning Inspectorate.

The TAN strengthens the Welsh language in terms of Planning but does not go far enough to reach what was in the Council's original Local Development Plan.

It was mentioned that a critical friend/independent opinion is needed to verify the decision. Doubts were raised whether the assessment should be carried out by Local Authorities as there could be a conflict of interest and there is a need to assess application objectively. It was suggested that work should be done with other Councils to agree on a way forward.

The Welsh language is part of the Sustainability Assessment which includes mitigating factors but the Council must act within national policies.

Attention was drawn to a number of villages that have seen major developments over the past few years and that this on occasions has had an effect on the language of the schools with more English.

It was suggested that mitigating factors to the community should be added rather than the individual developments. It was noted that the Welsh Government has started preparing a language impact assessment template in partnership with Authorities. Concern was expressed regarding the lack of guidance from the Government as it's possible to interpret the template differently.

Assessments have been made on certain pieces of land that is part of the Local Development Plan while preparing the Plan. The Council have to conduct a sustainability assessment and will provide the first report to the Assembly in October and as part of the assessment, the Council will have considered the impact on the Welsh language. This is part of the process of considering whether to make changes to the Plan.

Carmarthenshire's housing allocation within the current LDP's period is 15,997 houses. The Plan will be monitored every 4 years to see if the plan is working

	<p>or whether it needs adjusting.</p> <p>It was mentioned that more work is being done with the types of housing being built, not only affordable housing, but all types of housing.</p> <p>It was pointed out that the Welsh Government calls in some applications to review and it undermines the Council's decision on the basis of linguistic effect.</p> <p>It was noted that there will be an opportunity to contribute to the response through the Planning Committee, CMT and Executive Board. Councillors were asked to send comments to Llinos Quelch or Ian Llewelyn as soon as possible and by the end of February at the latest. It was asked to consult at the Communities Scrutiny Committee.</p>	
4.	<p>Update – Housing</p> <p>The Affordable Housing Delivery Plan will be discussed at the Communities Scrutiny Committee on Friday, 12 February. The Plan will be distributed to the public following the meeting.</p> <p>There are 5 principle to the Plan which are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeting help where the need is highest, in both urban and rural areas, by delivering more affordable homes to rent 2. Being more flexible – whether by bringing wasted homes back into use, buying existing homes or building new ones 3. Being creative to create more homes 4. Using our resources in the best possible was to ensure as many homes as possible 5. Using the expertise, skills and resources of others <p>It was noted that there is a link between community needs and the demand for housing.</p> <p>An application has been made to CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) to develop a welcome pack which is one of recommendations of ‘The Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire’ report.</p>	
5.	<p>Welsh Language Standards</p> <p>It was noted that the Council has not yet appealed the Standards. Welsh Local Government Association and Councillors from every Local Authority with responsibility for the Welsh Language are meeting on Thursday, 11 February and Meri Huws, the Welsh language Commissioner will be attending the meeting in the afternoon.</p> <p>The policy team are working through the Standards and are preparing an Action Plan for the 170 Standards.</p> <p>Guidance relating to dealing with telephone queries and correspondence were</p>	

	<p>circulated and it was noted that these had been prepared for staff. More guidance will be prepared during the next month to explain the Standards to staff.</p> <p>The audit of staff's language skills will be held during March and following collecting data from staff who work on computers, the Council will start to gather information from those staff who don't work in an office.</p> <p>It was noted that internal queries from staff and services relating to the Standards were increasing which is a good sign in relation to the awareness of the requirements but this does take time for the team to deal with the queries.</p> <p>The internal language use policy (Standards 98) was discussed and the Council will set out principles with regard to internal use and will encourage staff to use their Welsh language. Also the policy will set guidance, e.g. any correspondence to all Council staff must be sent bilingually. This will be an initial internal use policy with the intention of building on it over a period of time.</p> <p>There will be an intention to continue with the Language Champions project and possibly extend to every division.</p> <p>The Learning and Development Team are hoping to prepare a good support pack for staff in order for them to improve their skills. This currently depends on having some clarity from our new Welsh for Adults provider regarding the opportunities that will be available locally. The Council will need to consider how to use the new provision and to build on the offer in order to support staff sufficiently. The course 'Croeso i'r Gymraeg' (Welcome to Welsh) has started following the Council approving the Language Skills Strategy in January.</p> <p>It was agreed to discuss the internal policy in the next meeting of the Panel in May.</p> <p>A course 'Gwella'ch Cymraeg' (Improving your Welsh) to raise the confidence of Welsh speakers will be piloted with staff in the 'Regeneration and Policy division.</p> <p>It was noted that one Director has asked to pilot intensive courses for every level to support staff within the department.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Promotion Strategy</p> <p>Members were informed that the County Strategic Forum are asking the Council to look at the recommendations relating to increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers in the communities of Carmarthenshire and to prepare a 5 year projection. It was noted that the Forum are asking the Council for more details regarding what to include in the Promotion Strategy.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to ask the partners to identify their priorities in order to have a basis for the Promotion Strategy.</p> <p>It was decided to arrange a special meeting of the Panel to discuss the</p>	

	Promotion Strategy.	
7.	Any other matter No other matter was raised.	
8.	Date of next meeting It was noted that the next meeting had been arranged for 4 May 2016 but due to the special meeting and the election on 5 May it was agreed to postpone the meeting. The following items were agreed upon to put on the agenda: Promotion Strategy Implementation timetable for the recommendations and the Standards.	