

Panel Ymgynghorol yr Iaith Gymraeg

Welsh Language Advisory Panel

Tuesday, 12 July 2016 at 2 p.m.

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. Deryk Cundy	DC	Labour
Cyng. Peter Hughes Griffiths	PHG	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Ryan Bartlett	RT	Labour
Cllr. Gwyn Hopkins	GH	Plaid Cymru
Cyng. Joseph Davies	JD	Independent
Officers		
Gwyneth Ayers	GA	Policy and Partnership Officer
Paul Thomas	PTH	Assistant Chief Executive
Myfanwy Jones	MJ	Welsh Language Policy Officer

Item	Text and action points:	Responsible :
1.	Welcome and Apologies Councillor Mair Stephens welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr. Hugh Richards, Cllr. Edward Thomas, Cllr. Calum Higgins, Wendy Walters, Llinos Evans,	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be correct. The following updates were given – Item 3 – An email had been sent to Dafydd Llywelyn, Police and Crime Commissioner Dyfed Powys about promoting the Welsh language and asking him for his comments on the draft Promotion Strategy.	

Welsh for Adults – GA explained the context of the current situation with Aberystwyth University having won the tender to provide Welsh for adult courses in Carmarthenshire. But, since then, as Aberystwyth had not signed, Carmarthenshire County Council were asked to provide for a year. As we were offered only a third of the provision, it was agreed that we would only agree to provide if we were given it all. An application was introduced in this respect within 5 days. We do not know the current situation and it is proving to be frustrating to us as our internal provision is also being prevented as a result of the difficulties with the community provision.

PTh explained that the Council employs 25 members of staff who are currently providing Welsh for Adults. He explained that HR and the legal advice are of the view that the TUPE arrangements are applicable. The Chief Executive has been discussing with Medwyn Hughes from Trinity St David University and the Council is now going to provide Welsh for Adults for a year and this will put us in a strong position for the future.

Both CC and RB explained that the county’s learning citizens have real and valid concerns about the provision in September. It was also recognised that it is very late in the day to be organising and indeed advertising lessons and courses. It was agreed that it was heartening that we are now going to provide, but CC commented that they may well be some further legal consequences as Aberystwyth are not happy with the situation either.

GA commented that the Welsh Government should have considered the TUPE arrangements in the original tender. She also emphasised the effect that this has on the internal provision also.

Item 4 – The Internal Use of Welsh policy was discussed by the Staff Working Group on 14 June and everyone agreed on the contents.

It was explained also that the Employee Relations Forum had discussed the Policy on June 17 and had agreed with the policy in principle but had indicated that they would wish the Council to discuss with the government the possibility of funding the policy.

CC commented that they might have misunderstood, and that they were under the false impression that there should be cost implications to using Welsh internally as opposed to English.

The policy will be considered by the Corporate Management Team before going forward to the democratic system.

Item 5 – Complaints had been received about the provision of training for School governors and specifically the ‘Web safety’ course. The policy team has been in touch with the division responsible for school governance, who explained that the course was provided by an external provider and that its

	<p>medium was English. The need to consider the Standards when commissioning courses was explained and they were asked for a copy of the needs assessment for Welsh medium provision according to Standards 84 and 86.</p> <p>The division is currently reviewing its provision as a result of feedback from numerous governing bodies. The 'Web safety' training was cancelled as only one governor had registered to attend.</p> <p>PHG commented that a course to learn Welsh had been offered to governors, but was cancelled as only 2 had enrolled, and this was disappointing. MS suggested that there may be a need to consider the ways in which we communicate with governors and RB added that the Welsh medium courses are often cancelled after having been offered.</p> <p>It was suggested that further work might be necessary with the division in order to move things forward as is being done with Leisure, and that we might by asking them for more data</p> <p>Swimming lessons: MS explained that she had had 2 further meetings with Leisure. The question about preferred medium is now being asked as customers enrol. Progress is being made, the meetings are happening regularly and swimming lessons are a permanent fixture on the agenda, so they will be reporting on this. PTh noted that Welsh medium swimming instructors have recently been recruited.</p>	Policy team
3.	<p>Promotion Strategy</p> <p>A detailed discussion was had on the Promotion Strategy and the following points were conveyed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Section 2. It would be good to set the WESP above the Council's Council Strategic Plan in order to emphasise the fact that the latter was derived from the former. -Section 3. Emphasising our desire to reach out to a wider audience to attract more of our citizens to become bilingual would strengthen our vision further. DC added to this noting the importance of creating bilingual citizens in the county. - Section 4. Welsh in education Strategic Forum should be added to 6 -Section 7. There is a need for more consistency in terms of the data in the tables. Some of the detail should be removed and kept for the mapping work that will be done in the first stage of the strategy. -Secondary education needs to be added to the first table -The developments with S4C should be added to section 7,iii, 	Policy team

	-Cymraeg i blant and Cymraeg Campus should be added to 7.v.	
4.	<p>Welsh Language and Local Government working group report</p> <p>GA explained that she had been part of the Ministerial Working Group chaired by Rhodri Glyn Thomas on the request of Leighton Andrews. Assembly Members had been raising a point about the opportunity to give adequate place to the Welsh language when introducing reorganisation. There were representatives from various institutions and organisations as part of the working group. The group met for a short period of time and came to the conclusions contained in the report. GA explained that many of the suggestions made were similar to those made by the Carmarthenshire working group on the Welsh language and that it was heartening to see that that work was on the right track. She explained that she did not agree completely with all of the recommendations and that she did not represent Carmarthenshire Council on the working group, but rather she was there as an advisor. Following the Elections in May 2016, the report was presented to Mark Drakeford as Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, who has since extended the consultation period to the 9th of September, and we can provide a response should we so wish.</p> <p>DC made a remark that the report did not pay enough attention to the crucial element of increasing the number of Welsh speakers relating to the economy. He noted that public services alone will not make a difference to the Welsh language, but there needs to be work on work opportunities and businesses.</p> <p>PHG the comment that there were some strong recommendations under 'economy' however.</p> <p>MS made the comment that there was a need for more development work instead of <i>monitoring</i> development.</p> <p>RB suggested that it was strange that the report had named specific posts that needed Welsh language skills and GA agreed that the attention given to that element might take attention away from other aspects by the media.</p> <p>CC commented that the report was one of the most hopeful reports in recent years. He suggested that it might offer some of the radical answers needed to reinstate the Welsh language. He suggested that implementing the suggestions would bring us closer to the good work done in other countries such as Catalonia. He added that leadership is crucial as far as increasing the number of Welsh speakers was concerned, in order for the language to be granted a higher status and be used by public bodies. If Wales were able to implement some of the report's recommendations during the next 20 years, the Welsh language would be in a far better position.</p>	

	<p>MS noted that the report does not pay attention to public services generally, only local authorities. It is a shame that the same recommendations are not offered to other public organisations.</p> <p>The importance of developing Welsh language skills within public posts was discussed and it was noted that it was of vital importance that we should have a Welsh language professional learning program so that we can provide this.</p> <p>DC asked how Gwynedd County Council is completely bilingual compared to Carmarthenshire, and it was explained that they made a political policy decision on this during the reorganisation.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would offer a response to the consultation by the 9th of September which would agree with the ambition of the document and the recommendations but that they need to happen across the public sector rather than only in local authorities.</p>	Policy team
5.	<p>Any other matter</p> <p>GA summarised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our appeal to the Commissioner on the 3 Standards: <p>A response was received at the beginning of June on the matter of the use of translation equipment in meetings, which declared that the Standard was still valid. We responded within the time scale and included examples where we considered that complying with the Standard would not be reasonable. The evidence was of the same ilk as those in the consultation period.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Complaint that we received regarding the incorrect signs of Cwm Environmental. We recognised that this was true and that we would rectify the situation. We were told that the process of investigating would continue despite our response and it is quite likely that the process will take three months to complete. <p>It was commented that it is still an early phase in the Commissioner's existence and that their response is based in the Measure and its constraints. It was suggested that the Officers would not wish to veer from the legal processes and that it may take time for processes to become familiar.</p>	
6.	<p>Date of the next meeting</p> <p>4 October 2016 at 10 am in the DSU Conference room, County Hall – presentation by the Language Leaders from Leisure</p>	

	MS wished Gwyneth well on behalf of the Panel as she embarks on her maternity leave and GA explained that Helen Morgan would manage the team in her absence.	
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