

Welsh Language Advisory Panel

19 June 2025 at 2pm
Multilocation Meeting

MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

Present:

Cllr. Glynog Davies	GD	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Peter Hughes Griffiths	PHG	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Carys Jones	CJ	Plaid Cymru
Cllr. Sue Allen	SA	Independent
Cllr. Edward Skinner	ES	Labour
Cllr. Tina Higgins	TH	Labour
Officers		
Llinos Evans	LLE	Policy and Involvement Manager
Sioned Raymond	SR	Policy and Partnership Officer
Gwyneth Ayres	GA	Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager
Christopher Newcombe	ChN	Welsh Language Development Manager

No.	Discussion and action points	Responsible
1.	Welcome and Apologies Councillor Glynog Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were given to members for the delay in starting the meeting, a change of room was required at the last minute.	
2.	Young people migrating and leaving language strongholds Elen Bonner from Bangor University was welcomed to the meeting. Elen outlined the research carried out as part of the Arfor Programme to look at the mobility of young people within the region. It was noted that the Welsh Government recognises the significance of supporting the economic infrastructure of areas with a higher density of Welsh speakers. There is a perception of a lack of job opportunities for young people from Arfor areas (and that they are leaving as a result). But on the other hand, there is a perception that local employers face challenges in recruiting Welsh speakers. EB outlined the bilingual workforce recruitment package prepared as part of the research. As part of the package, there is a good practice framework for the recruitment of bilingual staff and a framework for the migration typology of Welsh speakers.	

	There are seven key themes that arise from the research: 1. Recruit 2. The recruitment process 3. Welsh language skills 4. Confidence and the Welsh language 5. Welsh Workplaces 6. Careers, Contracts and Salaries 7. Image Elen elaborated on the theme of Recruitment, noting that when recruiting, way of reaching the target audience should be planned. One example of that would be creating a short video promoting job opportunities. It was noted that good practice would be to consider who we are trying to attract to the workforce and use the available resources in the most advantageous way. The idea of creating workplaces that are attractive to Welsh speakers was discussed. This includes the messages to Welsh speakers to indicate that we welcome Language skills. Awareness of the potential jobs and careers available locally should also be raised among young people. In terms of the typology of migration decisions, this was part of Ellen's PhD work in looking at the factors that drive young people's decisions to migrate and stay local. Elen led the Members through the categories in terms of those who stay, those who leave and those who come back. Those who leave are the hardest to reach but there are still many who aspire to come back so it's essential to keep in touch with them. Those flying the flag were discussed – young people who have a strong sense of belonging, who feel an obligation to stay but need recognition for their decision. Those who choose to leave are keen for new opportunities and adventures but again, there is an opportunity to keep in touch with them for later stages in life e.g. starting a family. As for those who see an opportunity, they have returned contrary to expectations as a result of an attractive job offer. It was agreed to send a link to the research and a copy of the presentation to the Panel Members. Councillor PG noted that the practical element is very important and that we have a special Centre in Yr Egin which is working towards this. Councillor Carys Jones expressed her regret that those who choose to remain in the county, have to carry the weight of responsibility and expectations. It was agreed to send a link to research that has been carried out in Bro Ffestiniog, which looks at the decision to stay as an adventure. Councillor Sue Allen asked in terms of self-employment and those levels in rural areas. How do we consider those who are self-employed as part of this work compared to those who work in a sector such as the health service. An enquiry was made by Cllr. CJ in terms of the increase in costs to go to University and the change that has taken place as some young people stay local while going to University.	
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	Elen noted that the work that Arfor is doing in creating excitement about rural areas, social enterprises etc is extremely positive. Members asked if we could intervene and influence third year students more to show what is available in the county? Arfor has been looking at the potential of Clwb Cadw Cysyllt in order to share messages and opportunities amongst young people. An enquiry was made by Cllr. Tina Higgins on the availability of working from home and the influence of this on people's decisions. Elen explained that the COVID-19 period has facilitated this happening among young people who were a little older but on the other hand, this has created uncertainty among young people starting their first job.	
3.	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Chris Newcombe was welcomed to the Panel, following his appointment as Welsh Language Manager within the Department for Education, Children and Families. Chris is originally from Cardigan but has lived in Cardiff for twelve years. Chris was appointed to the post in April 2025 but prior to that was Principal School Improvement Consultant for five counties in the South East. Chris had also been a teacher and headteacher in the period prior to that. Chris outlined his work in relation to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the role within the Department for Education, Children and Families. The post is also responsible for the Promotion Strategy and the County Language Forum. We have also appointed, on secondment, the CSGA leader from Ceredigion County in order to increase capacity to lead the work. The current CSGA runs until 2027 and that work has now been included as part of the work of the Welsh Language Strategic County Forum in the county and the sub-groups that will lead on the outcomes are currently taking place. A new strategic partnership has been launched with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, with a dedicated tutor available to support schools preparing to progress on the linguistic continuum. Chris has also worked with the Welsh Language and Bilingualism Improvement Team to ensure that the team's work supports the work of the CSGA. A Headteachers' Forum was held to explain the work on the Welsh Language and Education Bill and the next steps in terms of implementation. An enquiry was made by Cllr. CJ for the Headteachers' response to the work and noted that they were aware of the Council's direction in relation to the CSGA what support is available. The response is still mixed but it is vital that we support our principals. There is an Immersion Centre at Ysgol Maes y Gwendraeth but work is underway to look at geographical capacity and to establish a centre at Ysgol Bro Dinefwr and Ysgol y Strade. The importance of promoting Welsh-medium education and the opportunities to work with a Cymraeg i Bawb scheme were also noted. It was agreed to arrange a face-to-face session with the Advisory Panel and Chris. GA noted the importance of involving community partners in the work, as advocates for the CSGA and for the Welsh Language and Education Bill. Gwyneth explained that the	

	Council will be expected to move towards the CEFR framework as well, and we will need to consider implications in terms of recruitment.	
4. WLGA Grant Final Report A copy of the final report was shared among Members. The report has been formally submitted to the Welsh Local Government Association and includes an evaluation of the projects as part of the Gibbs reflection cycle. Members thanked for the detailed report.		
4. Minutes of the meeting 20 January 2025 It was agreed that the records were an accurate record.		
Any other issue The Cllr Peter HG noted that he had received a copy of the Theatres programme from the Autumn through April. Peter has attracted the attention of the portfolio holder, Cllr. Hazel to the fact that there are few Welsh and Welsh medium performances in the programme across the sites. The county has special facilities in terms of Theatres, and it is disappointing to see so little of the Welsh language. Cllr. Hazel will discuss this with Ian Jones, the Head of Service. <i>Next meeting dates:</i> • 11 December at 2pm. • 12 March at 2pm		