

Panel Ymgynghorol y Gymraeg
Welsh Language Advisory Panel

12 March 2026 at 2pm
Multi-Venue Meeting

MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

Present:

Cyng. Peter Hughes Griffiths	PHG	Plaid Cymru
Cyng. Carys Jones (Chair)	CJ	Plaid Cymru
Cyng. Glynog Davies	GD	Plaid Cymru
Cyng. Sue Allen	SA	Independent
Cyng. Meinir Jones	MJ	Plaid Cymru
Cyng. Edward Skinner	ES	Labour
Cyng. Tina Higgins	TH	Labour
Officers		
Ian Jones	IJ	Head of Healthy Communities and Public Protection
Kelly Morris	KM	Learning and Development Adviser (Welsh Language)
Sally Bennett	SB	Learning and Development Adviser (Future Workforce)
Ben Lloyd	BL	Theatre Development Manager
Llinos Evans	LLE	Policy and Involvement Manager
Sioned Raymond	SR	Policy and Partnership Officer
Lynwen Davies	LD	Translator

Item	Text and action points	Responsible
1.	Welcome and Apologies Apologies were received from Councillor Jean Lewis, Paul Thomas and Gwyneth Ayers.	
2.	Carmarthenshire Theatres Ben Lloyd, who is the new Theatre Development Manager for Carmarthenshire County Council, was welcomed to the meeting. Ben noted his background and that he was keen to learn more from the Panel Members. Ben is learning Welsh and is keen to rebuild his confidence in the language. Ben was appointed to the role in October 2025 and comes from a creative and production background in theatres. He specialises in inclusion in theatre and was Chief Executive at Torch Theatre in Pembrokeshire before moving to Carmarthenshire.	

	Ben outlined the background in terms of the theatres and the context in terms of locations and structure. Carmarthenshire Theatres (TSG), operated by Carmarthenshire County Council (FCC), manages three key performing arts venues: Ffwrnes (Llanelli), The Lyric (Carmarthen), and The Miners (Ammanford). The organisation's mission is to ignite and nurture creativity in an inclusive and transformative way, aligning with the Council's well-being objectives and the wider cultural, social and economic goals of the region. As Carmarthenshire's theatre service, TSG sits within the Cultural Services portfolio which also includes Archives, Libraries and Museums. Cultural Services are in turn alongside Active Sport and Leisure, Outdoor Recreation and Public Protection within the Healthy Communities and Public Protection Division, which is part of FCW's Education and Leisure Directorate. TSG plays an integral role in supporting the theatre and arts ecology of Wales, at local, regional and national levels. The theaters are a key economic driver, located in the three most populous towns in the county and serving local commerce and tourism. TSG is playing an increasing role in supporting education, training, talent development and creative engagement in the region with strategic priorities aligned with the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations Act, and is a key partner on national initiatives promoting accessibility and inclusion (Breaking the Box). An active member of Creu Cymru, (the development agency for a vibrant and resilient performing arts sector in Wales) TSG receives regular funding from the Arts Council of Wales. Vision and Mission Vision: A Carmarthenshire where the arts are central to everyday life, and everyone is immersed in a strong, accessible bilingual culture. Mission: Ignite and nurture creativity in inclusive and transformative ways, helping communities live healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives. Strategic Goals • Fostering Creativity: Presenting, producing and encouraging participation in various arts programmes. • Promoting Equality: Ensuring inclusive access to the arts and promoting bilingual culture. • Strengthening Communities: Empowering people through arts-based engagement and development. • Being Sustainable and Resilient: Operating efficiently, embracing innovation, and responding to future challenges. Ben explained the recent recruitment opportunities, where it has been possible to recruit more Welsh speakers into the workplace. Targets for proficiency in Welsh have been set across the team, by March 2027. The challenges in planning Welsh-medium performances and productions were recognised and it was noted that a beneficial meeting had been held with Councillor Peter Hughes-Griffiths to review the programmes that had been in place. Councillor Peter's disappointment was noted in the number of Welsh-medium productions included in the autumn programme. It was explained that roadshows, which are produced by independent companies, are the crux of the programme. We are therefore dependent on generating income through	
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	spending in the bar etc. The costs of hosting a show were outlined and it was noted that shows that sell fewer tickets create particular funding challenges. In relation to Welsh-medium shows, it was noted that the situation in terms of living costs and rising costs has a direct impact on the success of performances. It was also noted that there were challenges in funding the grant for Welsh-medium productions, with increased pressure on the companies in terms of partnerships and travel. It was also explained that the popularity of performances in community halls etc creates another risk for Carmarthenshire Theatres. There is also widespread competition in trying to attract companies to use our theatres in the county, with the number of shows available through the medium of Welsh decreasing. Ben outlined some of the interventions that the theatres are trying to put in place. An example was given in relation to the Mega company, which is offered a specific space in the Lyric, for rehearsals etc, while ensuring Welsh medium performances locally. There was another example of a production of the Mabinogi, which will be performed in English but with strong elements of Welsh and British Sign Language. The theatres have also been able to attract additional funding in order to employ an officer to lead on the priorities, including the Welsh language. During the next period, the team will work to build working relationships with community organisations, as well as organisations such as Yr Egin, Mentrau Iaith and Urdd. The team monitors progress in terms of the Welsh language through the grant received from the Arts Council as well as planning new opportunities with young people to use the Welsh language in theatre. There was an enquiry as to how we market Welsh-medium performances. Ben explained that the biggest performances are planned between 9 and 18 months in advance; However, some smaller performances are so dependent on grant money, that the lead time is very rare. Ben explained that he was keen to review the marketing plan, in order to identify new opportunities for the future. There will be detailed consideration of the Welsh language as part of that. Ian Jones added that there is an in-house marketing group within his division and it is hoped that there will be an opportunity to advertise across all the attractions such as the country parks. The Cllr asked. Let's consider the importance of the Miners' Theatre and to see if there are specific opportunities in terms of attracting more local performances. The importance of The Miners to the communities of the Amman Valley was underlined. The Cllr noted. Peter Hughes-Griffiths expressed his appreciation to the division for the work being done but noted feedback in terms of the ability to follow up on telephone calls / book tickets via the Welsh line.	
3.	Carmarthenshire County Council's Apprenticeship Scheme Sally Bennett and Kelly Morris were welcomed to the meeting. Sally outlined the Amdani scheme and noted that 25 Apprentices had been recruited through the Future Workforce Programme. There has been an opportunity to recruit 17 of them over the summer of 2025 based on values.	

	Bilingualism has been a core consideration in recruitment and all Apprentices have received support to develop and receive Welsh language support. We outlined the learning and development support available to our apprentices, either face-to-face or through the Thinqi platform. Sally explained the Graduate scheme, and noted that we have supported 72 graduates to join the institution. Of those, 54 have secured full-time jobs with CSG. It was noted that the council is planning the next graduate program during Summer 2026. The aim through the scheme is to develop local talent, to build our leadership skills, to support diversity and inclusion and to attract our workforce to the future. Kelly explained the context of the support work in terms of skills in Welsh. The aim of the Amdani Welsh Language Development Programme is to incorporate the use of Welsh into all aspects of apprentices' work practices, and this includes • Raising confidence to speak and use Welsh • Offer tailored support according to ability level • Creating support networks through mentoring • Reinforcing the importance of providing bilingual services across all departments • Ensuring that all apprentices feel valued and able to use "what they have" Kelly outlined some of the comments that have been received from the apprentices in relation to the use of the Welsh language and a lack of confidence has clearly come through. Kelly explained that the team had introduced the importance of the Welsh language at the assessment centre and that the apprentices and their managers had attended a Working in a Bilingual Organisation workshop by IAITH, as well as a Welsh language awareness session by Menter Gorllewin Sir Gâr. Each apprentice has received an individual Welsh language development plan. Kelly outlined the main lessons learned, namely: • Recognition of the Welsh language as a central element of CSG provision. • More use of Welsh every day ("thank you", greetings etc) in schools and workplaces. • Enjoy the group dynamics and learning. • Informal and fun. • Tutor is excellent. • Awydd i siarad mwy o Gymraeg. • Continue the development of the Welsh language. The Cllr thanked. Peter Hughes Griffiths to the team for their work in planning in relation to the Welsh language.	
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	The Cllr asked. Carys Jones: what was the council doing in terms of trying to attract young people (aged 16 and over)? SB explained the work in terms of careers fairs and tried to explain to young people what job opportunities are available across the council. KM outlined some of the opportunities being planned in terms of learning Welsh in partnership with the National Learning Centre. These opportunities will be confirmed in April 2026. The Cllr noted. Carys Jones that a programme had been in place where people could shadow a Cabinet Member, and it would be good to be able to look at this again. It was noted that there are plans in place to recruit a new cohort of apprentices during 2026. Expectations regarding the Welsh language will remain at the same level.	
4.	Minutes of meeting 11 December 2025 It was agreed that the record was accurate.	
5.	Any other issue No issues arose.	
6.	Dates of next meeting: • 16 June 2026 at 2 pm.	