

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. Andrew Davies	HR	Plaid Cymru
Officers		
Llinos Evans	LLE	Policy and Involvement Manager
Sioned Raymond	SR	Policy and Partnership Officer
Abigail Cole	AND	Data Insight Officer
Luke Howells	LH	Performance Manager

No.	Discussion and action points	Responsible
1.	Welcome and Apologies Councillor Glynog Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr. Jean Lewis, Cllr. Edward Skinner and Gwyneth Ayers.	
2.	2021 Census Data Abigail Cole and Luke Howells were welcomed to the meeting to present the Census Data and the detailed report prepared by the Data and Insight Team. Below is an outline of the main points of the presentation. Background Carmarthenshire has experienced steady population growth in recent decades. Despite this, the number and percentage of Welsh speakers in the county has continued to decline. This shows demographic and cultural change that is putting the Welsh language under pressure. Use of Welsh in Carmarthenshire - Overall figures: 72,838 Welsh speakers recorded over the last 20 years. - Geographical variation: Proficiency in Welsh differs across areas of the county. Age groups:	

	• Children (3–15 years old) are a key demographic, but many of them live in households where no parent speaks Welsh. • The use of Welsh is falling significantly among older generations, especially after the age of 64. Welsh Speakers by Occupation and Industry Higher proportions of Welsh speakers can be found in: • Professional occupations • Skilled crafts • Education sector This suggests that employment sectors related to skills, training and learning contribute positively to the use of the Welsh language. Demographic pressures • Over 25% of the population of Carmarthenshire were born outside Wales. • There has been a 166% increase in immigration to the county. These changes put additional pressure on the Welsh language as a community language. Welsh Language Skills • 85,287 residents said they had no <i>Welsh skills</i>. • 20,036 residents (10.96%) reported that they could <i>only understand spoken Welsh</i>. • Variations exist by age, geography and sex: - Higher levels of passive understanding among women than men. - Younger and middle-aged groups show greater potential for partial understanding. Conclusion Carmarthenshire continues to be the heart of the Welsh language in Wales, but the data highlights a continuing decline in active usage, alongside demographic pressures from migration. While specific occupations and education provide opportunities to maintain and promote the language, the overall picture is indicative of the need for continued support and targeted interventions to keep Welsh as a living community language in the county. Members thanked Abigail for her thorough and helpful presentation. Councillor Andrew Davies underlined the importance of retaining young people in the County and that members have a duty to act and do as much as we can as a Panel. Following the presentation, it was discussed to invite Dr Elen Bonner to the next meeting. Elen has done a lot of research in this area in particular looking at young people migrating and leaving linguistic strongholds. Bangor University have recently launched a bilingual workforce recruitment pack to offer advice and guidance to an employer looking to tackle the challenges of recruiting a bilingual workforce.	
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3. Welsh Language Annual Report 2024-25	It was explained that the Annual Report for the Welsh Language had been prepared and a copy was shared in advance with members. The report shows continued progress in the implementation of Welsh Language Standards, expanding learning opportunities for staff, supporting businesses and communities through ARFOR, and using additional funding to strengthen the Welsh language in the workplace and in the community. The Council is facing an increase in the number of staff without Welsh language skills (Level 0), possibly due to new recruitment. At the same time, it continues to invest significantly in learning Welsh and expanding formal and informal opportunities for staff. Most training continues to be provided bilingually, however, they tend to be delivered in English. There was a discussion about the Language Skills Strategy outlining the following key points moving forward: • To ensure increased bilingual recruitment and workforce planning in line with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards. • Expanding apprenticeship opportunities and developing staff through the medium of Welsh. • Embedding the daily use of Welsh through pilot projects and gadgets such as <i>ARFer</i>. • Build a bilingual organisational culture to make change sustainable. • Link the new Language Skills Strategy to a Recruitment Strategy to create a coherent approach. The officers were thanked for preparing the report.	
4. Welsh Government Grant Update	An update on Welsh Government Grant projects was provided by Llinos Evans. It was explained that a final report is being prepared which will be shared at the next meeting of the Panel. The part 1 and 2 projects which are now final and have been finally agreed have been outlined: PART 1 <u>Objective 1: Increase in Welsh speakers</u> • To offer practical, specialist support to schools to move along the language continuum, specifically in the Newcastle Emlyn area and in line with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. <u>Objective 2: To maintain the pride, use and confidence of the County residents in the Welsh language</u> a) Carry out a feasibility study to hold a Carmarthenshire Music/Rock Festival	

	"b) Welsh / bilingual music sessions in pubs / halls / community venues across the county" <u>Objective 3: Welsh as a norm in the workplace and the workforce</u> • Leadership Sessions in a Bilingual Country with Hugh Irwin. Sessions will be held for third and fourth tier Managers in the People + Digital Management team as well as cabinet members and the Corporate Management team. The sessions gave a taste of creating the climate for change, engagement and planning for the future. • Language Skills Strategy - support from Nia Bennett, of Effectus HR in reviewing the Council's Language Skills Strategy and Recruitment Strategy. Undertake an analysis of the council's current position in recruitment and workforce planning. Analyse recruitment and training data to aid workforce planning. • Future Workforce Engagement Project with a specific focus on Welsh-medium Apprenticeships and Graduates – a piece of research with Llewelyn and Hanna Hopwood to establish a baseline for future workforce planning. <u>Objective 4: Communities in need</u> • Create a fund to empower high priority communities to develop projects that respond to the results of the 2021 Census • Housing developments – a study to look at patterns and impact on communities in the county where housing developments are seen and the further link this has on the further housing sale chain within the county PART 2 <u>Objective 1: Increase in Welsh speakers</u> • To offer practical, specialist support to schools to move along the language continuum, in line with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan: - Ysgol Maes y Gwendraeth Cluster • Education sector support • To foster the ability to promote Welsh education through the behavioural sciences <u>Objective 2: To maintain the pride, use and confidence of the County residents in the Welsh language</u> • Pilot project to pilot a way of working in the field of sport with a focus on support for rugby clubs in order to develop the use of Welsh within junior (and senior) departments and clubs • Pilot project to pilot a way of working by supporting a Sports Leaders Academy within the county's focus sports (Athletics, Basketball, Cycling and Netball) in order to develop the use of Welsh within the clubs • An addition to a project funded in part 1 to Mentrau Iaith y Sir to enable more music sessions to be held following the success of the first ones. <u>Objective 3: Welsh as a norm in the workplace and the workforce</u>	
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	- Addendum to part 1 funded project focusing on changing Welsh language habit/behaviour within the Council workforce <u>Objective 4: Communities in need</u> - Extend the BRO Project to work specifically with communities in the Amman Valley area to develop an understanding of the requirements in the area and develop a multi-agency action plan to move forward.	
4.	Minutes of the meeting 20 January 2025 It was agreed that the records were an accurate record.	
	Any other issue No further issues were discussed. <i>Next meeting dates:</i> 11 September at 2pm 11 December at 2pm.	