

## EDUCATION & YOUTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an overview of the requirements upon local authorities to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to demonstrate how they will meet the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act (2013) places a statutory requirement on local authorities to prepare and introduce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to cover a period of three years to March 2017, reviewing it on an annual basis. The Act enables Welsh Ministers to approve the Plan as submitted, approve the Plan with modifications or reject the plan and require local authorities to prepare another Plan.

This report provides specific details about Flintshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan - how the Council meets its obligations in promoting Welsh-medium education, assesses the demand for Welsh-medium education, increases the number of pupils accessing their education through the medium of Welsh and improves standards of pupil attainment in both Welsh first and second language.

The format of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is set by Welsh Government on a standard template which focuses on seven key target areas. Local authorities are required to demonstrate how they are meeting these targets on an annual basis. Plans are required to be submitted to Welsh Government by 20<sup>th</sup> December each year. There is a statutory requirement to consult on the Plan with a prescribed list of stakeholders for a period of eight weeks. The Plan is then considered by Ministers and feedback provided. Plans are operational from April 1<sup>st</sup> each year. The local authority's WESP must be published on its website by June 1<sup>st</sup> each year and copied made available in its offices and other suitable places.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members receive the report on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
2	That members consider the progress made by the Council against the targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
3	That members note the effective, multi-agency, partnership working within the Welsh in Education Strategic Forum which creates and monitors the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN</b>
1.01	<p>The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) has been in place since April 2014 and since then has been updated on an annual basis, in line with Welsh Government (WG) guidelines. Flintshire's WESP was approved by Welsh Ministers following a small number of minor modifications. The latest updated WESP was submitted in draft form by the deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and the final version, following a period of consultation with statutory consultees, was submitted to WG on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016. Flintshire County Council is currently awaiting feedback on this Plan. This final WESP covering the period 2016-17, following any further recommendations for modification by Welsh Government, will then be published on the Council's website by the statutory deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.</p>
1.02	<p>The responsibility for producing the WESP sits with the Senior Manager for School Improvement within the Education &amp; Youth Portfolio. The Plan is produced, however, by a very effective partnership approach between officers of the local authority, representatives from Welsh and English medium schools and other key organisations with an interest in promoting Welsh-medium education and the Welsh language. This wide ranging group is known as the Welsh in Education Strategic Forum. The remit of this forum is to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Agree, implement and review a co-ordinated approach that best delivers the requirement of the Welsh Government's Welsh medium Education Strategy within Flintshire.</li><li>- Be responsible for the delivery of the action plan incorporating seven key outcomes.</li><li>- Monitor, evaluate and consider the impact of the delivery of the action plan in raising standards in Welsh first and second language.</li><li>- Forum representatives are expected to consult with and feedback to their respective associate stakeholders.</li></ul> <p>The Forum is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth, and the Chief Officer is Vice-Chair and meets four times a year. Sub-groups related to each of the targets meet regularly during the autumn term to produce the refreshed plan for submission to WG each December.</p>

	<p>The membership of the Forum is as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cabinet Member</li> <li>- Chief Officer</li> <li>- Senior Managers for School Improvement, Inclusion &amp; Progression and Integrated Youth Services</li> <li>- Pupil Services Manager</li> <li>- Welsh in Education Team Manager</li> <li>- Headteacher representatives from Welsh-medium primary and secondary schools</li> <li>- Headteacher representatives from English-medium primary and secondary schools</li> <li>- Menter Iaith Sir y Fflint</li> <li>- Mudiad Methrin</li> <li>- Urdd Gobaith Cymru</li> <li>- Coleg Cambria</li> <li>- Parent Representative – RHAG/Syfflag</li> <li>- Governor Representative</li> </ul> <p>The Forum works very effectively as a multi-agency platform for delivering and monitoring the WESP. All members bring high levels of knowledge and expertise to the Forum which are freely shared to achieve the common vision of promoting Welsh-medium education and the Welsh language. The Forum is also very robust in holding the local authority to account in its delivery of the Plan and achieving the targets contained within it.</p>
1.03	<p>The WESP has to begin with a vision statement by the local authority on its aims for Welsh-medium education. Flintshire’s vision, agreed by the Forum, is as follows:-</p> <p>“Flintshire County Council endeavours to <b>increase</b> the number of fluent Welsh speakers within its boundaries, with the aim of creating an increasingly bilingual county and country.</p> <p>Flintshire County Council is committed to supporting, expanding and promoting Welsh-medium education within the whole community, increasing the number and percentage of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in compliance with the Welsh Government’s Welsh-medium Education Strategy of developing learners who are fully bilingual (i.e. fluent in both English and Welsh.)”</p> <p>Part 2 of the WESP contains an Action Plan outlining the 7 key outcomes/targets in the government’s Welsh-medium Education Strategy. The Plan is expected to contain answers to a number of prompt questions in relation to each outcome. These are designed to demonstrate the local authority’s current position, the policies in place, the processes and activities designed to achieve the targets and the progress expected. The Plan is updated every year to show the actual progress made.</p> <p>The targets are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More seven-year old children being taught through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>2. More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer</li> </ol>

	<p>from primary to secondary school.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>4. More learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>5. More learners with higher-level Welsh-language skills.</li> <li>6. Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs.</li> <li>7. Workforce planning and continuing professional development.</li> </ol> <p>Section 3 of the Plan contains a variety of appendices which provide performance data, details of the membership of the Forum and the range of statutory consultees.</p>
1.04	<p>One of the statutory requirements placed on the Council is to regularly assess the demand for Welsh-medium education. In accordance with the 2013 Act, the Council undertakes a detailed survey every three years and uses the information from this to plan for future provision. The first assessment was undertaken in 2009, the second in 2013 and this is next due to be refreshed in 2016.</p> <p>As a direct result of the response to the 2013 survey, which indicated that there was a growing demand for Welsh-medium education in the Deeside area, and the reorganisation of primary education in Shotton which resulted the release of the Shotton Infants site, the Council was able to expand Welsh-medium provision in this area of the authority. Parents indicated in the survey that having Welsh-medium provision in the local community, rather than having to travel longer distances to either Flint or Mold, would make it more likely that they would choose to educate their children through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>The Shotton Infants building is now known as Ysgol Croes Atti Glannau Dyfrdwy. This is a satellite of Ysgol Croes Atti, Flint and is under the leadership and management of the Headteacher and Governing Body of this school in a joint arrangement with the local authority. This new Welsh-medium provision opened in September 2014 for nursery and reception aged pupils with the plan to grow it from 'the bottom up' and ensure its sustainability. This satellite provides facilities for Welsh-medium education to the communities of Connah's Quay, Shotton, Queensferry and Garden City, easing the pressure on Ysgol Croes Atti (Flint) and Ysgol Glanrafon (Mold).</p> <p>In conjunction with Mudiad Meithrin, (the Welsh-medium pre-school association), a Cylch (Welsh-medium playgroup) has also been established on this site which provides early education and wrap around care for pupils. There is also a parent and toddler group which meets on the site. Providing a range of early years services to support child development and improve Welsh language skills is a critical factor in encouraging parents to choose Welsh-medium education, particularly if they are not Welsh speaking themselves.</p> <p>This approach of jointly located services is a core element of the Council's strategy to encourage more parents to choose Welsh medium education in order to meet Outcome 1 of the WESP (to increase the number of 7 year olds in Welsh-medium education).</p>

	<p>In 2015 the Council extended its number of Welsh-medium approved settings for the delivery of early education (Early Entitlement) from 5 to 7 – one based at the Glannau Dyfdrwy site and another in Garden City. Children from these settings will be actively encouraged to transfer into the Welsh-medium primary school provision at Glannau Dyfdrwy.</p> <p>The pupil numbers at Ysgol Croes Atti Glannau Dyfdrwy have almost doubled in the first year, from 13 in September 2014 to 25 in September 2015. Admissions requests for September 2016 are currently being processed but are very encouraging so far. This new provision represents real success in delivering the targets in the WESP.</p>
1.05	<p>The plan comprises 50+ pages of detailed reporting against each target and can be found on Flintshire County Council's website and is hyperlinked to this report.</p> <p>Key successes in meeting the targets in the Plan for 2015-16 recently submitted to Welsh government include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers assessed through the medium of Welsh in Year 2 (7 yr olds) increasing by 13 pupils, an increase of 12.5% overall.</li> <li>- The percentage of Flintshire 7 yr olds in Welsh-medium education increasing by 0.8% from 5.8% to 6.6% in 2015.</li> <li>- The numbers of Year 2 pupils in 2015 already exceeding the target set for 2017, requiring the target to be revised upwards to 120 pupils.</li> <li>- The numbers of nursery pupils in Welsh-medium primary schools increasing by 1.6%, representing 7.5% of the total nursery population in Flintshire.</li> <li>- The number of primary aged pupils being educated in the Welsh medium sector rising from 896 in 2014 to 903 in 2015.</li> <li>- The opening of Ysgol Croes Atti Glannau Dyfdrwy on time for September 2014.</li> <li>- The expansion of Welsh-medium early education approved providers from 5 to 7 settings.</li> <li>- The expansion of Ysgol Glanrafon, Mold by the provision of a mobile classroom to meet rising pupil numbers.</li> <li>- An increase in the number of learners from English-medium primary schools choosing to access Welsh-medium secondary education through the 'Trochi' programme at Ysgol Maes Garmon from 11 in 2014 to 13 in 2015.</li> <li>- Increase in number of pupils in Year 9 at Ysgol Maes Garmon being assessed in Welsh first language – 75 pupils in 2014 rising to 89 pupils in 2015.</li> <li>- Increase in number of pupils achieving A*-C Welsh (first language) at Ysgol Maes Garmon from 59.7% in 2014 to 72% in 2015.</li> <li>- 100% learners at Ysgol Maes Garmon achieving the Level 1 Threshold (5 passes A-G) at GCSE in 2014 and 2015.</li> <li>- Increasing trend of performance of 7 year olds assessed in Language, Literacy &amp; Communication (Welsh first language) at the expected level over three years. 84.4% in 2013 to 91.18% in 2015.</li> <li>- Improved performance at KS3 in Welsh (first language) from 56% in 2014 to 80% in 2015.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rising trend of performance of pupils in Welsh second language at the end of Key Stage 2 (11 yr olds) from 61.2% in 2013 to 75.6% in 2015 at the expected level (National Curriculum Level 4). Also an increase in the higher than expected level from 80% in 2013 to 85.7% in 2015 (National Curriculum Level 5).</li> <li>- Rising trend in performance at Welsh Second Language GCSE (Short Course) from 58% pupils achieving grade A*-C in 2013 to 63.6% in 2015.</li> <li>- 100% pass rate for Welsh first language and Welsh second language at A level.</li> <li>- High levels of participation in professional development opportunities delivered through the Welsh in Education Team locally and through the joint arrangement with Denbighshire and Conwy.</li> <li>- Introduction of the sabbatical training courses in conjunction with Bangor University (Canolfan Bedwyr) for teachers and classroom assistants with good participation levels from Flintshire schools eg on the Entrance Level Sabbatical Course held in September 2015, 9 out of the 11 participants were from Flintshire.</li> </ul>
1.06	<p>Targets for improvement in future plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing to increase the number of pupils in Welsh-medium education at all phases.</li> <li>- Continuing to raise standards of pupil attainment in both Welsh first and second language, particularly at Key Stage 2 (11 year olds).</li> <li>- Improving the rates of transition from Welsh-medium primary school to Welsh-medium secondary school.</li> <li>- Increasing number of pupils from Cylch Garden City choosing Welsh-medium education at Ysgol Croes Atti Glannau Dyfdrwy.</li> <li>- Completing the demand survey for Welsh-medium education in 2016.</li> <li>- Responding to the outcomes of the demand survey and exploring options in other areas of the authority to increase Welsh-medium provision.</li> <li>- Creating a federation arrangement between two schools to protect Welsh-medium education in the north Flintshire area of the authority.</li> </ul>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None as a result of this report.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	None attached.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>Paper copies of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan can be made available on request by contacting:-</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Claire Homard  Senior Manager School Improvement  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704019  <b>E-mail:</b> claire.homard@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Welsh-medium education</b> – where pupils are taught all subjects (except English) in Welsh and Welsh is the main language of the school.
7.02	<b>English-medium education</b> – where pupils are taught all subjects in English, are taught Welsh as a second language and English is the main language of the school.
7.03	<b>Federation</b> - The federation of schools is a legal process which enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils in that federation.