

## CABINET

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday, 20 September 2016
<b>Report Subject</b>	Welsh Language Annual Report
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has a statutory duty to publish an annual report setting out how it has met the Welsh Language Standards (WLS). The WLS with which the Council has to comply are set out in a Compliance Notice, these Notices are unique to each organisation and specify what the organisations are expected to do and deliver in Welsh and by when they are required to comply. The majority of the Standards are consistent with the commitments set out in the Council's former Welsh Language Scheme.

This report provides an overview of the Welsh Language Annual Report, progress being made to comply with the Standards and identifies areas for improvement.

Flintshire County Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2015/16 is attached as an Appendix. This is the Council's first report on meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. It includes data specified in the Compliance Notice and actions that have been taken to meet the Standards.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To agree the Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report for the period 2015/16. The report is attached as an Appendix.
2	Note progress being made to implement the Welsh Language Standards and areas for improvement.

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	<b>EXPLAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT</b>
1.01	<p>The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) Measure 2011 enables the Welsh Ministers to specify Standards relating to the Welsh language. The aim of the Standards is to continue and develop the work of the former Welsh Language Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• improving the services Welsh speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh</li><li>• increasing the use people make of Welsh language services</li><li>• making it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language</li><li>• ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.</li></ul>
1.02	<p>The Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) served Compliance Notices on each of the 22 local authorities in Wales identifying the Standards to which they must comply. Compliance Notices are unique to each organisation reflecting the linguistic profile of the local community and organisational capacity to meet the Standards. The WLC has the powers to investigate and take action against those organisations who fail to comply with the Standards. This includes imposing financial penalties for non-compliance.</p>
1.03	<p>The Council is required to publish a Welsh Language Annual Report to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Standards 158, 164 and 170). The report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The number of employees who have Welsh language skills</li><li>• The number and % of employees who attended training through the medium of Welsh</li><li>• The number of posts advertised as :<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Welsh essential</li><li>○ Welsh desirable</li><li>○ Welsh skills not necessary</li><li>○ Requirement to learn Welsh</li></ul></li><li>• The number of complaints received relating to compliance with the Operational Standards, Policy Making Standards and Service Delivery Standards</li><li>• Information on how the Council has complied with the Standards</li></ul>
1.04	<p>As the first set of Standards with which the Council has to comply came into force on March 30 2016, a full set of data is not available for this annual report. Future reports will be more detailed.</p>
1.05	<p><b>Progress and areas for improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Services are implementing the More than Just Words Framework, which has placed them in an excellent position to comply with the Standards and deliver bilingual services.</li><li>• The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is being updated and is an</li></ul>

	<p>important strategy for increasing the number of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh and, over time, the pool of potential Welsh speaking employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increased number of employees are attending Welsh language training compared to 2014/15. However, more employees need to complete the Welsh language awareness training which is available on Flintshire Acadami at Learning Pool.</li> <li>• As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016, 42% of employees have completed the Welsh language skills audit, compared to 40% on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015. It is important that employees complete the audit. Without this baseline data it is difficult to develop a strategy to ensure that employees have the appropriate level of Welsh language skill for their post. Further initiatives to increase the response rate to the audit will be introduced over the next 12 months.</li> </ul>
1.06	<p>There were three complaints relating to Welsh language during 2015/16 compared to five complaints during 2014/15. The complaints related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• corresponding in English when the customer had initiated correspondence in Welsh</li> <li>• English music recorded on the Welsh telephone line for calls to Council Tax</li> <li>• public information in Welsh not equal to English information</li> </ul> <p>However, although not included in this annual report, there have been 10 complaints since 1 April 2016. These will be reported in the 2016/17 annual report; they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to provide a service through the medium of Welsh</li> <li>• Misspelling on a sign</li> <li>• Information - signage, posters and forms - available in English only (four complaints)</li> <li>• Corresponding in English only when the customer had initiated correspondence in Welsh</li> <li>• Welsh not equal to English on website and Facebook pages*</li> <li>• Equipment/machinery instructions not available in Welsh</li> <li>• Television not tuned into Welsh channels</li> </ul> <p>These complaints are being investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Commissioner has dismissed the complaint relating to corresponding to a customer in English, on the grounds that it was not the responsibility of the Council but the function of the Returning Officer, who is exempt from the Standards.</p>
1.07	<p>A series of “workforce news” items, including Frequently Asked Questions, were circulated to ensure managers and employees were aware of the changes and were compliant with the new Standards. A page dedicated to the Standards has been placed on the intranet with resources to support employees. Further “workforce news” items and initiatives to raise awareness are planned over the next few months to remind employees of the Standards with which they should be already complying and to give advance warning of the Standards which will come into force on 30 September 2016.</p>

1.08	From 30 September, the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to produce a five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and a policy for Welsh in the workplace. These documents are currently being drafted. The purpose of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy is to raise the visibility and profile of the Welsh language and maintain or increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county. The strategy will be closely linked with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. A policy for Welsh in the Workplace is also being developed; this aims to increase the opportunities for employees to use Welsh whilst at work.
1.09	To ensure that the reporting timeframe for the Welsh Language Annual Report can be met, a limited number of specific actions and measures will be developed around completion of the Welsh language skills audit and incorporated into CAMMS (the Council's integrated performance management system). This will facilitate effective and efficient reporting for services in the future.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	It is difficult to estimate the full financial cost of implementing the Standards. There will be an increased use of interpretation and translation services to meet many of the Standards and meet the needs of Welsh speaking customers and employees. Non-compliance with individual Standards may result in the Commissioner imposing financial penalties on the Council. Continual breaches by services may have a significant cumulative financial impact on the Council.
2.02	There are training implications for employees. Both Welsh language skills training and Welsh language awareness training is provided. The numbers accessing Welsh language awareness training needs to be increased. Managers need to ensure that employees comply with the Standards and are aware of their responsibilities.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Consultation was not required for this report, but services have contributed to the content of the Annual Report.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	Meeting the Standards will promote equality for Welsh speakers in service delivery and for Council Welsh speaking employees. They will ensure that the Council considers the impact of policies and decisions on both Welsh speakers and the Welsh language to promote positive impact and eliminate/reduce negative impact.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Welsh Language Annual Report

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p><a href="#">Compliance Notice</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Fiona Mocko Policy Advisor Equality and Cohesion  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702122  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk">fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<p><b>CAMMS:</b> an integrated planning, risk management and programme/project management and reporting system.</p> <p><b>Compliance Notice:</b> specifies the exact standards that each organisation should comply with and also the date by which they are required to comply with a standard.</p> <p><b>Welsh Language Measure: Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011:</b> confirms the official status of Welsh, creates a new system of placing duties on bodies to provide services through the medium of Welsh and creating the post of Language Commissioner with enforcement powers.</p> <p><b>Welsh Language Scheme:</b> policy stating the Council's commitment to the Welsh language, this includes an action plan setting out how it plans to deliver bilingual services.</p> <p><b>Welsh Language Standards:</b> specify standards of conduct language in relation to the Welsh language.</p>