



**Flintshire  
County  
Council**

**Welsh  
Language  
Annual Report  
2015/16**

## Welsh Language Standards

### Monitoring Report 2015 - 2016

#### Executive Summary

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## **Executive Summary**

The Welsh Language Standards came into force on 30 March 2016 and the Council was required to comply with 146 Standards by this date. Some of these Standards we are challenging and are waiting to hear a decision from the Commissioner. Many of the Standards that apply to the Council reflect the commitments in our previous Welsh Language Scheme. We will need to comply with some additional Standards by 30 September 2016. This is the first Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report and covers the period April 2015 to March 2016; it shows actions we have been taking to comply with the Standards. It also includes data we are required to publish.

We welcome the Welsh Standards and the opportunities that they bring to increase the provision of Welsh medium services and the rights they offer to the public and employees. Throughout Wales this will increase the visibility of the Welsh language. We are proud of our heritage and value the Welsh language; we are delighted to be hosting the Urdd Eisteddfod in Flint during May/June 2016. The Council believes that respecting and meeting the language needs and preferences of our customers is central to good and effective customer care. We provide services to the most vulnerable people in our communities, where accessing services in an individual's first language is especially important.

We recognise that we are making progress but there are still improvements to be made. We will strengthen the links between Welsh language and the Council's Improvement Plan to contribute towards mainstreaming Welsh language throughout the Council's priorities. The implementation of a new performance management system, CAMMS, and the incorporation of Equality and Welsh language impact assessments within this system will contribute to effective monitoring of implementation of the new Welsh Language Standards. The Council supports one of the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language". This supports our aim to continue to improve the provision of services through the medium of Welsh.

Colin Everett  
Chief Executive

Councillor Billy Mullin  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Management

## **Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2015/16**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Flintshire County Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales it will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards continues and develops the work of the Welsh Language Schemes.
- 1.2 The Council is required to publish an annual report by 30 June as set out in the Standards 158, 164 and 170. The full list of Standards with which we are required to comply is available [here](#). We will also report annually to the Council's Cabinet on performance in relation to the Standards.  
This report focuses on the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016; this is the first annual report since the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards.
- 1.3 We have published a list of actions we have taken to comply with the Standards on our website.
- 1.4 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Standards.

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## **2. Compliance with Service Delivery Standards**

- 2.1 To ensure that all employees are aware of the Service Delivery Standards we have been circulating information to managers and employees on a regular basis. Managers were asked to ensure their Services were compliant.
- 2.2 Specific guidance has been issued to employees:
- Dealing with telephone calls
  - Dealing with correspondence
  - Reception services
  - Producing documents, certificates for the public
  - Social media, websites, self - service machines
- 2.3 Standard statements offering customers the opportunity to correspond in Welsh have been provided to employees, these are included on letterheads and documents. A standard statement welcoming correspondence in Welsh is available for inclusion as a footer on all emails which are sent externally.
- 2.4 Iaith Gwaith posters are on display in all reception areas, Welsh speaking employees and Welsh learners wear the Iaith Gwaith lanyards and/or badges.
- 2.5 The Council's website, Apps and self-service machines are bilingual as is the Council's Twitter page. The Council's Social Media Policy includes a requirement to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.
- 2.6 Members of the public who apply for courses run by the Council will be asked their preferred language (Welsh or English) to assess the need for lessons to be provided through the medium of Welsh. Swimming lessons are already available through the medium of Welsh.
- 2.7 A Complaints Procedure is already in place. Complaints about Welsh language are set out in section six.
- 2.8 The induction pack for new employees now includes additional information about the Standards and responsibilities and rights of employees.

2.9 A Welsh language delegated leads network, with membership comprising representatives from each of the Council's portfolios, has been established. The aim of this group is to champion Welsh language across the Council, promote the use of Welsh by employees, share good practice within their service and contribute to initiatives to increase the use of Welsh.

2.10 We have challenged the Standards relating to meetings, audio announcements and signage in service delivery. Until the Commissioner has informed the Council of her decision on the evidence we have presented, we will continue to comply with the commitments made within our previous Welsh Language Scheme.

### **3. Compliance with Policy Making Standards**

3.1 The equality impact assessment toolkit has been reviewed and amended to include Welsh language. Work is currently underway to incorporate this within the corporate performance management system. This will ensure that progress to completing impact assessments can be monitored more effectively.

3.2 Training will be provided to elected members and employees on completing equality and Welsh language impact assessments. This is supported by an e-learning module.

3.3 Menter Iaith Sir Y Fflint attend the Equality Impact Assessment Stakeholder Group in which representatives of people with protected characteristics and Welsh speakers contribute to equality impact assessments as they are being undertaken.

3.3 Guidance on consultation and research, including Welsh language is available on the intranet. This has been promoted to employees as has the requirement to comply with the Policy Making Standards.

### **4. Compliance with Operational Standards**

4.1 Employees and managers have been informed of the Operational Standards and the rights of employees.

4.2 Everyone has been informed of their rights to receive personally addressed employment related correspondence through the medium of Welsh. This information is recorded on iTrent (human resource management system) and by managers.

- 4.3 Cysgliad (Welsh grammar, spellchecker and dictionary) is available for employees.
- 4.4 Resources to support Welsh learners and Welsh speakers are available on the intranet.
- 4.5 Instructions on how to set up laith Gwaith on email signatures, bilingual email addresses and bilingual out of office messages have been circulated to employees.
- 4.6 A process to assess the linguistic skills required for new posts is in place. A method to record the number of posts that have been assessed as desirable or essential has been developed. The number of posts assessed as Welsh essential or Welsh desirable will be reported from 2017 onwards.
- 4.7 Application forms for posts have been altered for job applicants to indicate whether they wish to use Welsh at interview.
- 4.8 We are challenging Standards relating to meetings, audio messages, intranet and signage in the workplace.
- 4.9 We have assessed the Welsh language skills of employees (excluding those employed by schools). The results of the assessment show that under 50% of employees have completed the skills audit. Action will be taken over the next 12 months to increase the number of employees who complete this audit. The breakdown of employees who have completed the audit is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Number and percentage of employees who have completed the Welsh language skills audit

Portfolio	Completed	Headcount	%
Chief Executives	31	51	60.78%
Community and Enterprise	225	400	56.25%
Education and Youth	110	281	39.15%
Governance	117	135	86.67%
Org Change 1	175	443	39.50%
Org Change 2	124	446	27.80%
People and Resources	119	164	72.56%
Planning and Environment	111	178	62.36%
Social Services	376	973	38.64%
Streetscene and Transportation	115	493	23.33%

<b>FCC</b>	<b>1503</b>	<b>3568</b>	<b>42.12%</b>
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Language skills are assessed at five levels, the description of each level is set out in Appendix 1.

The results from Table 2 set out employees' level of Welsh language skills. It shows that of the 42.12% employees who completed the skills audit over 33% of employees do not have any Welsh language skills and less than 5% of employees are fully proficient. Over 40% of employees assess themselves at level 1 Entry level – "some Welsh skills".

Table 2: The number and percentage of employees and level of Welsh language skills.

Portfolio	Level 0 (None)		Level 1 (Entry)		Level 2 (Foundation)		Level 3 (Intermediate)		Level 4 (Advanced)		Level 5 (Fully Proficient)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Chief Executives	7	22.58	8	25.81	10	32.26	2	6.45	3	9.68	1	3.23
Community and Enterprise	70	31.11	92	40.89	33	14.67	13	5.78	8	3.56	8	3.56
Education and Youth	30	27.27	38	34.55	20	18.18	6	5.45	5	4.55	11	10.00
Governance	41	35.04	47	40.17	12	10.26	4	3.42	5	4.27	6	5.13
Org Change 1	48	27.43	73	41.71	22	12.57	12	6.86	9	5.14	10	5.71
Org Change 2	56	45.16	49	39.52	7	5.65	5	4.03	2	1.61	5	4.03
People and Resources	42	35.29	51	42.86	10	8.40	5	4.20	9	7.56	2	1.68
Planning & Environment	36	32.43	42	37.84	11	9.91	5	4.50	12	10.81	5	4.50
Social Services	117	31.12	166	44.15	53	14.10	13	3.46	13	3.46	13	3.46
Streetscene and Transportation	52	45.22	38	33.04	9	7.83	8	6.96	4	3.48	4	3.48
<b>FCC</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>33.50</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>40.20</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>12.46</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>4.66</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>4.32</b>

## 5. Training

5.1 The Council provides Welsh language awareness training for employees. This is offered as an e-learning module or as a workshop. During 2015/16 this training was completed by 155 employees. In addition, Welsh language skills training is available for employees. Attendance on Welsh language skills training is set out in Section 5.3.

5.2 We are required to report:



i) the number of employees who attended courses through the medium of Welsh - no employees have attended training through the medium of Welsh.

ii) if a Welsh version of a course was offered - the number and % of employees who attended the Welsh version. There is information on the Council's intranet pages to inform employees that if they wish to attend any of the courses in Welsh to contact Corporate Learning and Development Team. The Council has an informal agreement with

Gwynedd County Council which means that Flintshire County Council employees can attend courses in Welsh with them. No one has enquired or requested any training through the medium of Welsh.

### 5.3 **Welsh language skills training**

A variety of Welsh language skills training courses are provided, these include short courses for employees who have no knowledge of Welsh, to help them learn some basic expressions through to opportunities for fluent Welsh speakers to develop confidence and writing skills. There was an increase in the number of employees who attended Welsh language skills training during 2015/16, 129 employees attended training compared to 51 employees who attended training during 2014/15. Details of Welsh language skills training attended during 2015/16 is set out below.

Table 3: Number of employees attending Welsh language skills training

Level	Number 2015/16
Basic Language Skills	40
Entry	29
Foundation	20
Intermediate	24
Advanced	14
Proficient	2
Total	129

### 5.4 To encourage the use of Welsh in the workplace:

- employees who attend Welsh lessons also receive a desktop dictionary in addition to access to Cysgliad.

- external training providers have been asked to provide bilingual slides within their presentations such as Welcome/Croeso, Thank you/Diolch
- managers are being provided with bookmarks with a sample of expressions to use in meetings
- expressions to use in shops and cafes in Council premises are promoted during Shwmae/Su'mae Day.

We regularly undertake initiatives to promote awareness of Welsh language training and encourage use of Welsh in the workplace. During the Urdd May/June 2016 and Euro 2016 we will be highlighting the importance of learning Welsh.

## 6. Complaints

During 2015/16 we received three complaints relating to the Welsh language

Portfolio	Service	Detail	Outcome
Community and Enterprise	Flintshire Registration Service	Correspondence regarding a Notice of Marriage sent in English (Welsh ceremony booked).	Employees have been reminded about the importance of responding to customers in their preferred language (Welsh or English)
Community and Enterprise	Revenues	English music recorded on the Welsh line for Council Tax (should be Welsh music).	The music played whilst waiting for telephone calls to be answered is to be reviewed
Organisational Change - IB	Leisure Services (Afon Spa)	Public information in Welsh is not equal to English.	Leisure services pages on the website have been reviewed to improve the quality of the Welsh pages

## **7. Future Actions**

Moving forward during 2016/17 we will continue to remind employees and managers about their responsibilities to meet the Welsh language Standards.

We are preparing to meet the Standards that come into force on 30 September 2016. This will include developing a policy for Welsh in the workplace and working with partners to develop a Promotion Strategy to increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county.

We will include specific actions to ensure and report on compliance with the Standards within the Council's performance management system. The development and implementation of the Well-being plan, as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, will be a further opportunity to enhance the work which we are doing to meet the Standards.

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## Appendix 1 WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

	<b>LISTENING / SPEAKING</b>	<b>READING / UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>WRITING</b>
<b>LEVEL 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No appreciable ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No appreciable ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No appreciable ability</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronounce Welsh words, place names, department names, etc.</li> <li>• Greet and understand a greeting.</li> <li>• Use basic every day words and phrases, e.g. thank you, please, excuse me, etc.</li> <li>• Understand / pass on simple verbal requests of a routine / familiar / predictable kind using simple language, e.g. 'May I speak to...'</li> <li>• State simple requests and follow up with extra questions / requests in a limited way</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand simple key words and sentences on familiar / predictable matters relating to my own job area, e.g. on signs, in letters.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill in simple forms, note down simple information, e.g. date and venue of a meeting, Welsh address, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the gist of Welsh conversations in work</li> <li>• Respond to simple job-related requests and requests for factual information</li> <li>• Ask simple questions and understand simple responses</li> <li>• Express opinions in a limited way as long as the topic is familiar</li> <li>• Understand instructions when simple language is used</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand factual, routine information and the gist of non-routine information on familiar matters related to my own job area , e.g. in standard letters, leaflets, etc.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write short simple notes / letters / messages on a limited range of predictable topics related to my personal experiences or my own job area</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand much of what is said in an office, meeting, etc.</li> <li>• Keep up a simple conversation on a work related topic, but may need to revert to English to discuss / report on complex or technical information</li> <li>• Answer predictable or factual questions</li> <li>• Take and pass on most messages that are likely to require attention</li> <li>• Offer advice on simple job-related matters</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scan texts for relevant information</li> <li>• Understand a fair range of job-related routine and non-routine correspondence, factual literature, etc. when standard language is used.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a detailed / descriptive letter relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker</li> <li>• Make reasonably accurate notes while someone is talking</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL 4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep up an extended casual work related conversation or give a presentation with a good degree of fluency and range of expression but may need to revert to English to answer unpredictable questions or explain complex points or technical information</li> <li>• Contribute effectively to meetings and seminars within own area of work</li> <li>• Argue for/against a case</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and understand information fairly quickly as long as no unusual vocabulary is used and no particularly complex or technical information is involved</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare formal letters of many familiar types such as enquiry, complaint, request and application</li> <li>• Take reasonably accurate notes in meetings or straightforward dictation</li> <li>• Write a report / document relating to my own job area, but will need to have it checked by a Welsh speaker</li> </ul>
<b>LEVEL 5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on / talk about routine, non-routine, complex, contentious or sensitive issues related to own experiences</li> <li>• Give a presentation/demonstration</li> <li>• Deal confidently with hostile or unpredictable questions</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand complex ideas and information expressed in complex or specialist language in documents, reports correspondence and articles, etc.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I Can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write letters on any subject</li> <li>• Write full / accurate notes of meetings while continuing to follow discussions and participate in them</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carry out negotiations using complex / technical terms</li><li>• Give media interviews</li></ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write reports / documents with confidence but they may need to be checked for minor errors in terms of spelling and grammar</li></ul> |
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