

## CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday 14 February 2019
<b>Report Subject</b>	Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council is required by standard 145 of the Compliance Notice issued under section 44 of Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 to develop a five year strategy to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in the county and to publish the strategy on the Council's website. This strategy identifies how the Council can work with partner agencies and others in the community such as Town and Community Councils and businesses to promote the Welsh language.

Promoting the Welsh language will contribute to the Well-being and Future Generations Act 2015, specifically the goal to achieve "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language".

The purpose of this report is to present the final five-year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for Flintshire (Appendix 1) for consideration prior to adoption by Cabinet.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To review and endorse the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Promotion Strategy, prior to adoption by Cabinet.
2	To support a review of opportunities to work in partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council, Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam and other key stakeholders to develop a sub-regional forum to monitor and progress both counties' Welsh Language Promotion Strategies.

## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE WELSH LANGUAGE PROMOTION STRATEGY
1.01	<p>The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 set out to modernise the legal framework regarding the use of the Welsh language in the delivery of public services. In September 2015, the Council was issued with a Compliance Notice, which set out a requirement to implement 171 Welsh Language Standards from March 2016 onwards.</p>
1.02	<p>Welsh Language Standard 145 requires the Council to prepare a five-year Promotion Strategy. Standard 145 states:</p> <p>You must produce, and publish on your website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5 year period concerned; and</li><li>(b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy.</li></ul>
1.03	<p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (Appendix 1) has been revised following consultation and aims to:</p> <p>Support an <b>increase</b> of the current level of Welsh speakers within the county from 19,343 to 21,891 (15%) during this 5 year period. This equates to an increase of approximately 2,548 Welsh speakers (over the age of three years). This takes into account the increase in children attending Welsh medium education as identified in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan as well as an increase in the number of adults learning Welsh.</p>
1.04	<p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will complement the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and Social Services “More Than Words” action plan which aims to strengthen Welsh language services in social care. The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will also contribute to the Well-being and Future Generations Act 2015 and the goal “A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language”.</p>
1.05	<p>A total of 157 people responded to the consultation on the Strategy, which was open to both employees and the public. 152 people responded to the on-line consultation and five paper versions of the questionnaires were returned. Of the questionnaires completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 85% stated they agreed with the strategy.</li><li>• 79% agreed with the objectives set</li></ul>
1.06	<p>Analysis of the responses show that the feedback was mostly positive, but there were some differing views. Details of the responses are attached as</p>

Appendix 2; the main response issues described below:

<b>Issue raised</b>	<b>Response</b>
Targets need to be more challenging and ambitious	Targets have been increased to just above the % of Welsh speakers identified in the 2001 Census (there was a decrease in 2011).
More marketing to raise awareness of Welsh language and importance of delivering services in first language to Welsh speakers	Actions included to raise awareness of why delivering services in language of choice is important to customers, particularly those who are vulnerable.
Expense of spending resources on Welsh language in financially challenging times	Providing information and services in Welsh is a statutory requirement. The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will be focused on doing things differently within existing resources and in partnership to avoid additional expenditure.
Focus on promoting Welsh culture	More actions on promoting Welsh culture included.
Potential to discriminate against non-Welsh speakers	Increased opportunities to learn Welsh are available. HR are reviewing opportunities to support people appointed to posts which are designated Welsh essential. Not all posts will be designated Welsh essential or will require post holders to be fully bilingual- basic courtesy skills may only be required. Events and activities to promote Welsh culture and encourage a “sense of belonging” and inclusion whether we speak Welsh or not.

1.07

To support the implementation of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy it will be important to ensure that members of the public and employees are aware that:

- producing information bilingually and delivering bilingual services is statutory and continues to be the Council’s commitments from the former Welsh Language Scheme;
- the impact on individual safety for some customers if services are not delivered in their preferred language i.e. service user with dementia whose first language is Welsh;
- no additional resources have been identified to meet the Strategy; meeting the commitments will involve working differently and collaborating with partner agencies;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Strategy supports the Council in delivering bilingual services to meet the needs of Welsh speaking customers.</li> </ul>
1.08	<p><b>Monitoring Progress</b></p> <p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy recognises that we cannot achieve the target to increase the number of Welsh speakers alone and we will need to work with a range of partners to promote learning Welsh and increase opportunities to use Welsh at work and in the community.</p>
1.09	<p>The Welsh Language Commissioner has cited as good practice the model used by Ynys Môn Council to monitor the implementation of their Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. Their Welsh Language Strategic Forum, comprises representatives of agencies who contribute to the achievement of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and is chaired by an independent person. This model encourages agencies to work together, avoid duplication of effort and ensure resources are used effectively.</p>
1.10	<p>Coleg Cambria, Menter Iaith Flint a Wrecsam and the Urdd will have a key role in contributing to the achievement of Flintshire County Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. They also contribute to Wrexham County Borough Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.</p> <p>A partnership approach between Flintshire and Wrexham to build on the work of an existing Welsh Language Forum (Fforwm Sirol) facilitated by Menter Iaith could be explored. The aim would be to refocus its activities on increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers across Flintshire and Wrexham counties and support the implementation of both Welsh Language Promotion Strategies.</p>
1.11	<p>Reporting on progress to meeting the targets will be included in the Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report, which is presented to Cabinet annually. The Strategy will be subject to an annual review which will include review of targets and activities to identify if any changes are needed.</p>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	<p>The Council has already made a commitment for employees to learn Welsh and a budget for Welsh language training is available. The main commitment will be from services to ensure that they have considered the Welsh language in their work.</p>

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	<p>A workshop was held with services. Consultation with members of the public, employees and with Welsh language organisations has been undertaken.</p>

	The draft policy was considered by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee last year.
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<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
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4.01	<p>Implementing the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will have a positive impact on the Welsh language and Welsh speakers enabling them to access more services in their language of choice, in particular Welsh speakers who may be vulnerable such as a Welsh speaking person who has dementia.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the requirement of the Welsh Language Standard 145 could lead to a potential £5,000 fine from the Welsh Language Commissioner’s Office.</p>
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
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5.01	<p>Appendix 1: Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2019/2024</p> <p>Appendix 2: Results from consultation.</p>
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<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
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6.01	<p><a href="#">Cymraeg 2050 A Million Welsh speakers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mwy na Geiriau</a></p> <p><a href="#">WESP</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Fiona Mocko, Strategic Policy Advisor  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702122  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk">fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>
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<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
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7.01	<p><b>Compliance Notice:</b> specifies the exact standards with which each organisation should comply and also the date by which they are required to comply with a standard.</p> <p><b>Fforwm Sirol (Welsh Language Forum):</b> A Welsh language forum covering Flintshire and Wrexham which brings together agencies who have responsibility to provide services and activities in Welsh.</p> <p><b>Mwy na Geiriau / More Than Just Words Framework:</b> A Welsh Government strategic framework to strengthen Welsh language services in health, social services and social care. It includes the principle of the “Active Offer” where customers are offered services in Welsh as opposed to having to request them.</p>
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**Welsh in Education Strategic Plan:** the Council's plan to expand and promote Welsh medium education.

**Welsh Language Measure:** Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 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.

**Welsh Language Standards:** specify standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.