

Draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

2022- 2032

Consultation Feedback

1. Background

1.1 This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* and the content complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019. We have given due regard to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when setting the targets in our plan.

1.2 The public consultation sought the views on stakeholders on Flintshire's proposed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032. The results from this consultation will be used to inform the final document. This plan is due to be implemented from September 2022.

1.3 Flintshire County Council believes that the Welsh Language belongs to everyone. The Welsh Education Strategic Plan in Flintshire is a long-term strategic tool for us to contribute our part in the country-wide goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Flintshire County Council is committed to increase the number of those speaking Welsh within the wider community, with the aim of creating an increasingly bilingual county and country. We aspire for people of all ages to improve their Welsh language skills and have the ability to use these confidently within their families, in their places of learning, in their workplaces and in their communities.

1.4 The consultation period ran from 17th November 2021 to 15th January 2022 and was available on the Council website. It was also sent directly to the following stakeholders in line with Welsh Government guidance:

- a. neighbouring local authorities
- b. heads of all schools maintained by the authority
- c. the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the authority
- d. all further education sector institutions within the area
- e. in respect of any foundation school or voluntary school in the area –

- the person responsible for appointing governors
- if the school has a religious character, the relevant religious body
- f. The Welsh Language Commissioner (within the meaning of section 2 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011);
- g. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (within the meaning of "Early years development and Childcare Partnership" Section 119 of the Act 1998);
- h. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales;
- i. providers of initial school teacher training;
- j. such organisations providing services to children and young people as the local authority considers appropriate; and
- k. such other persons or bodies as appear to the local authority to be appropriate.

2. Response to the Consultation

2.1 We received 9 responses to the Consultation. There were 6 responses received in Welsh, one received in Welsh and English and 2 responses in English. Respondents were asked to provide comments relating to each section of the draft WESP Plan. The report was also considered by the Education, Youth and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 2nd December 2021.

2.2 The local authority has considered the responses received during the period of the consultation and has amended the draft WESP accordingly (Appendix 2). Feedback from the consultation will also contribute to the forward work programme of the Welsh Strategic Forum. The Forum meets termly, with work programmes developed through its three sub-groups (Provision, Standards and Workforce). The Forum's remit is to:-

- Support council officers to develop the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which includes challenging targets and performance measures to achieve success
- Monitor the implementation of the WESP and evaluate success in achieving its objectives

- Ensure appropriate cross-referencing is made to other plans and strategies – locally, regionally and nationally as determined by Welsh Government regulatory requirements
- Provide support and challenge to all partners on the implementation of the WESP particularly schools including workforce and governors
- Provide good quality Welsh-medium education provision strongly advertised to parents/carers to encourage high level of take up
- Provide feedback to the Council’s leadership and elected members on the priorities within the WESP through the appropriate means e.g. Cabinet, Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Work closely with relevant bodies and partners, including neighbouring local authorities to improve the success of the WESP in achieving its objectives
- Work with the 5 other Councils within Welsh Government Group 4 to achieve the WESP targets.
- Provide a forum for information sharing and the dissemination of best practice
- Reach out to other authorities’ WESP Forum groups to support/challenge each other by sharing good practice and investigating common challenges

2.3 A draft integrated impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The final integrated impact assessment will be completed once feedback on the WESP is received from Welsh Government and ahead of implementation in September 2022.

3. Overview of responses

3.1 Responses included a number of comments that recognised and agreed with the vision and principles of the draft WESP including the following:

- Mae'r strategaeth yn glir ac wedi ei selio ar weledigaeth gadarn gan Gyngor Sir y Fflint i sicrhau bod y Gymraeg yn iaith sy'n eiddo i bawb. Mae'r egwyddorion sylfaenol yn ddilys ac yn ddigon uchelgeisiol. *The strategy is clear and based on a strong vision from Flintshire County Council to ensure that the Welsh language is a language that belongs to everyone. The basic principles are valid and ambitious enough.*
- Mae ymrwymiad y Cyngor i'r gwaith yn cyd-fynd â pholisïau eraill Llywodraeth Cymru yn y maes. Mae'r awdurdod lleol wedi sefydlu amcanion sy'n cynnwys sylw priodol i gyfathrebu'n eglur gyda rhieni, i weithio gyda rhanddeiliaid yn yr ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg, i ddarparu hyfforddiant priodol i'r gweithlu ac i weithio gydag ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg i godi safonau yn y Gymraeg. *The Council's commitment to the work is in line with other Welsh Government policies in the field. The local authority has established objectives that include appropriate attention to communicating clearly with parents, to work with stakeholders in Welsh-medium schools, to provide appropriate training for the workforce and to work with English-medium schools to raise standards in Welsh.*
- Yn gyffredinol credwn fod y cynllun strategol hwn yn adlewyrchu gweledigaeth gadarnhaol y Sir dros y Gymraeg ym myd addysg. Rydym yn croesawu'r camau gweithredu sydd wedi'u cynnwys a bydd cyflawni amcanion a thargedau'r cynllun hwn yn gam arwyddocaol yng nghyd-destun cyfraniad y sir at y weledigaeth genedlaethol o Gymru gynyddol ddwyieithog. *This strategic plan reflects the County's positive vision for the Welsh language in education. We welcome the actions included. Achieving the objectives and targets of this strategic plan will be a significant contribution to the national vision of an increasingly bilingual Wales.*

Rydym yn cymeradwyo ysbryd dyheadol y Cynllun, ac yn croesawu'r egwyddorion sydd wrth galon y strategaeth. *We applaud the aspirational spirit of the Plan, and welcome the principles at the heart of the strategy.*

3.2 Comments suggesting amendments or additions to the draft WESP have been carefully considered, including the need to change wording and provide greater clarity. Areas addressed included:

- Provide greater clarity around the Capital Programme for Welsh medium provision
- Include stronger reference to the links between other council plans such as the Welsh Language Strategy, the Local Development Plan and the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- Further information about support for Welsh-medium learners with Additional Learning Needs
- Include partnership working with a wider range of provision such as registered childminders and day nurseries

- Highlight the importance of working with schools and colleges to support the accessibility of training and qualifications
- Specific actions around GCSE and A level Welsh provision across the county
- Statistical and descriptive outline of Flintshire's current education workforce

3.3 Many of the respondents asked for specific detail, which is not included in the overall WESP. This included:

- how the Council will communicate with parents
- enhanced information on Cylch Meithrin provision within the county
- how schools will progress along the Welsh Government determined language categorisation model
- any considerations or intentions regarding development of dual stream provision within the County
- how the Council will work with initial teacher education providers, neighbouring authorities and similar authorities
- Development of immersion support for latecomers to Welsh medium provision
- Details of how the authority will target staff in schools to use more Welsh and raise confidence in teaching through the medium of Welsh
- Additional school data to be included.

Much of this detail is either already included in the work programme of the Welsh Strategic Forum and its sub groups or will now feed into future work streams as part of the 10 year strategy from 2022. The WESP is a strategic plan and will necessitate a significant number of actions to achieve all of the targets within. It would not be practical to include all of these within the plan which is already significant in length. We acknowledge, however, the considerable effort respondents have made in suggesting helpful actions to be considered, and these will be shared with the Welsh Strategic Forum and contribute to action plans for each of the 7 outcomes within the WESP.

3.4 As a result of these and other comments, the draft WESP has been amended.

3.5 A more comprehensive summary of responses will be reported to future meetings of the Welsh Strategic Forum and the Education, Youth and Culture Overview Scrutiny Committee following feedback from Welsh Ministers.