

**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

**24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVES OFFICE**

**REPORT OF THE  
HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY & DEMOCRATIC  
SERVICES**

**- K. JONES**

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**PART 1. Doc Code: PRB-240714-REP-CE-KJ**

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## **PART 1, SECTION C, ITEM 1**

### **1. WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2013/2014 AND CORPORATE ACTION PLAN 2013/2016**

#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide Members with the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report for 2013/2014 and the updated Corporate Action Plan 2013/2016.

#### **Background**

The revised Welsh Language Scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007, which amends and replaces the original scheme which has been in place since March 1997.

The Action Plan was produced in 2013 as an agreed way forward in liaison with the Welsh Language Commission pending the introduction of the Welsh Standards.

With the imminent introduction of the Welsh Language Standards (scheduled for November 2014) it is anticipated that this will be the last monitoring report on the current Scheme.

#### **Overview of Progress**

Guidance produced by the Welsh Language Commissioner has been followed in producing this report which includes information on performance indicators and other relevant information.

Progress against actions is included in the action plan which is appended to the report.

#### **Welsh Language Standards**

In our response to the Standards Investigation we have been clear that while we are committed to promoting the Welsh language and Welsh culture, in the current financial climate the Standards, if applied in full, would create significant additional financial and human resources pressures on us.

Additionally the general moratorium on external recruitment, as we are forced to downsize, makes work to increase linguistic capability in our workforce very difficult.

The impact the Welsh Language Standards will have on our services and internal administration will be subject to careful consideration when they are announced in the autumn.

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 - Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report  
2013/2014

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Wards Affected**

All

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## **COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

### **WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2013/2014 AND CORPORATE ACTION PLAN 2013/2016**

#### **(a) Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation following consultation with the relevant Scrutiny Committee and determination and approval by Council.

#### **(b) Sustainability Appraisal**

##### ***Community Plan Impacts***

Economic Prosperity	-	No Impact
Education & Lifelong Learning	-	No Impact
Better Health & Wellbeing	-	No Impact
Environment & Transport	-	No Impact
Crime & Disorder	-	No Impact

##### ***Other Impacts***

Welsh Language	-	Positive
Sustainable Development	-	Positive
Equalities	-	Positive
Social Inclusion	-	Positive

#### **(c) Consultation**

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 does not require a public consultation exercise to be conducted as part of the production of Annual Reports for Single Integrated Plans. However, an inclusive approach has been taken to the production of the Annual Report, with many partners having contributed to the final draft.

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL NEDD PORT TALBOT**

**WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME**

**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**

**2013/2014**

# Annual Monitoring Report 2013/14

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## **1. Scheme Management and Administration**

Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Council's Welsh Language Scheme (the Scheme) lies with Karen Jackson, Corporate Strategy and Performance Co-ordinator.

The Heads of Service Equalities and Community Cohesion Group monitors progress on the implementation of the Scheme and its action plan as well as supporting the mainstreaming of equalities within the Council.

Each directorate provides assistance in monitoring the Scheme. This information in turn informs and supports the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan and the Neath Port Talbot partnership Single Integrated Plan, as well as strengthening our underlying principles.

At an Elected Member level the Scheme, and its implementation, falls within the Cabinet portfolio of the Equality Champion, Cllr Arwyn Woolcock.

The Scheme, the Annual Report and Action Plan are subject to the Council's established executive reporting mechanism which includes scrutiny at senior officer and elected member level, i.e. Heads of Service Equalities and Community Cohesion Group, Corporate Management Group and Policy and Resources Cabinet Board/Scrutiny and Council.

## **2. Service Planning and Provision**

With the increasing financial constraints imposed on Councils, 2013/14 has been a challenging period for Neath Port Talbot.

### **Corporate Plan 2013-2016**

This Plan confirmed our commitment to protect important public services, particularly those that support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our communities, at a time of enduring cuts in public spending.

It set out our top priorities for a three year period as well as building on progress made to date.

Work has begun to consider aligning the improvement priorities and equality objectives to ensure that the Corporate Improvement Plan and Strategic Equality Plan are both relevant and feed each other giving a more coherent and relevant reflection of our work.

The impact of the new Welsh Language Standards on our services and internal administration will be subject to careful consideration especially as we continue to face significant financial constraints.

## **Strategic Integrated Plan**

The Single Integrated Plan is the Local Service Board's Plan to improve the health and wellbeing of local people. The Local Service Board is a strategic partnership forum in Neath Port Talbot which brings together senior leaders from across the public, private and voluntary sectors to identify and agree areas for collaborative working that will improve the wellbeing of local people.

Our communities' cultural and historic heritage is important as are the needs of protected characteristic (equality) groups. Social inclusion across sustainable communities is our goal including the protection of the Welsh language in our communities where the Welsh language is important.

- Preserve and enhance the County Borough's cultural heritage and identity including the Welsh language in language sensitive areas.
- Ensure pupils develop their numeracy and literacy skills (English and Welsh).
- We will ensure that sufficient and appropriate school places are available and that schools are accessible to pupils, including Welsh-medium schools.

## **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan**

We recognise that language and culture are essential parts of an individual's identity and we are therefore committed to promoting and celebrating the Welsh language and culture in a pro-active and inclusive way.

Our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014 - 2017 details how we plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in the wider communities and how we plan for future growth.

The Plan contains specific intervention actions and targets that will strengthen the Welsh language in these 'heartlands' as well as ensuring that demand for Welsh medium education will be met in other parts of the County Borough

A survey to determine the demand for Welsh medium education was undertaken in November 2013 and we are in the process of considering the findings in order to plan for future provision.

## **Strategic Equality Plan**

Throughout its work, both as an organisation in its own right and in partnership with others, the Council has endeavoured to adhere to the principles of sustainable development, social inclusion and fairness. This commitment to providing fair and equitable services and employment permeates not only its own policies and plans but also the partnership strategies and plans its supports.

The Welsh language is, and will continue to be, considered alongside work related to groups with protected characteristics as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.



## **Community Cohesion**

As part of the regional approach to community cohesion a regional event was held to identify 'how through joint working, we can tackle the Community Cohesion agenda regionally and together make a difference to the people in our communities.' ('Bringing Communities Together' Western Bay Regional Community Cohesion Programme).

Many key areas were discussed and one of the recurring themes was community sustainability and empowerment; something that has been acknowledged in the Single Integrated Plan. The community cohesion programmes that are to follow will by their very nature impact on communities, individuals, schools, employment, language and culture.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

Equality impact assessments have continued to be a significant feature in our work during the year. The Welsh language continues to be included in the assessment process alongside assessments of the impact of change upon protected characteristics identified under the Equality Act 2010.

In order to develop the Equality Impact Assessment process, a number of training sessions have been arranged to increase officers' and Members' knowledge and understanding of the requirements and the importance of undertaking equality impact assessments.

The assessment criterion of Community Cohesion has been included in the Equality Impact Assessment since March 2014 which will add an extra dimension to the process as well as allowing for wider consideration of the impact of the Welsh language within and across communities

## **Website**

We are currently working to bring the content of our website up to date. In order to ensure the website is fit for purpose we are undertaking a systematic review of the most frequently viewed web pages. Officers from the identified service areas are working on updating their information as well as ensuring it is translated and available on the appropriate Welsh web pages.

During 2013/14 the review identified that of the 3000 pages on our site 80% of visits were made to the top 250 pages. In the short time that this review has been in being we have made progress with one service removing 30 outdated English only web pages and another removing 75 duplicated pages.

By concentrating our efforts to ensure the most frequently viewed web pages are relevant, up to date and available in both languages we will be able to provide a more effective service which meets people's needs.

A number of new self service applications, including bulk collections, pest control, pot holes, refuse and recycling equipment and street lighting have been incorporated into the website to enable greater access for the public.

We continue to endeavour to ensure our website meets the requirements of all who access it. To this end we will be working with a range of interested groups to ensure the website is as accessible as possible.

### **3. Dealing with Other Organisations and Procurement**

The procurement service works to ensure a consistent approach to procurement across a wide range of supplies, services and works.

The service is mindful of its legal obligations not only with regard to the spending of public money but also to the legal requirements in respect of the Welsh language. The procurement team works with service managers during the entire process to ensure that the Welsh language and equalities are considered at every stage.

#### **WLB/WLI 1 Number and percentage of the sample of third parties monitored that conform to the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme:**

##### **Care Services**

As in previous years, in order to examine, assess and monitor services provided on behalf of the Council, and in particular Social Services, Health and Housing, by contractors, consultants, agents and third parties a survey was undertaken of a sample of providers of social care.

A telephone questionnaire was undertaken with a snapshot of 10 providers of residential care.

##### **Survey Results**

Once again, there were some significant variances between providers, with some answering positively and offering services and information bilingually, while identifying others that have little provision.

80% of the providers approached had Welsh speaking staff, which is 20% higher than last year. They actively converse directly with Welsh speaking residents, which 70% of the homes currently have; and providers continue to recognise the importance of this. 1 home which does not currently have Welsh speaking staff, does offer bi-lingual literature.

The production of bilingual information/leaflets is low, with 20% responding to having this in place. One home does produce their complaints procedure in Welsh, recognising the need for further literature.

More positively 50% had bilingual place signs.

It is recognised that generally, further work is required to educate, support and advise providers in relation to the responsibilities and expectations placed on them with regard to Welsh language. Officers will need to be sensitive to market needs and provide guidance on how best to approach this, including the sharing of best practice.

Officers within the Directorate have produced an action plan to address the strategic framework for Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care, 'More Than Just Words'. Work will progress during 2014-15 to develop the profile of Welsh language and adopt services to meet need.

## **Grants and Funding**

While we have always been committed to applying our equality principles to funding applications with the current financial constraints we employed greater rigour when carrying out a review of funding to third sector organisations in Neath Port Talbot.

An impact assessment was undertaken on the review itself as well as each organisation being asked to complete individual assessments which included the criteria of protected characteristics and Welsh language.

## **4. Welsh Language Frontline Services and Linguistic Skills**

### **Staff Awareness**

We were conscious that with the many changes having taken place over recent years that it was opportune to remind staff of the requirements of our Scheme. A combination of activities has begun to raise the profile of Welsh within the Council. Articles on the Welsh language have been included in our internal newsletter 'In the Loop' as well as publicity of the 'How to...' guides which includes sections on producing bilingual publications and information on the service provided by the Welsh Translation Unit.

The work currently taking place to update and translate our website has provided an opportunity not only for officers to be reminded of the requirements of our Scheme but also to have more awareness of the Welsh language in general.

Work that has been undertaken in relation to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Standards investigation has been a catalyst for increased awareness of our scheme. The Standards Investigation has also provided an opportunity to give full and careful consideration to the impacts any proposed Standards would have on us should they be introduced in their entirety in these financially constrained times.

### **Frontline Services**

Guidance for the designation of posts is available on the intranet, to assist in the process of designating posts as 'Welsh essential' or 'Welsh desirable' in accordance with the Scheme. Due to the financial challenges faced by the Council there are a limited number of posts advertised and the majority of these are only being advertised internally.

**WLI 2: Number and Percentage of main reception, call centres or one stop shop posts that have been denoted as ‘Welsh essential’ and have been filled by staff who are bilingual**

<b>Customer Services</b>	<b>No. of Staff FTE</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speaking Staff</b>	<b>% of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Posts Designated Welsh – No Requirement/Desirable/Essential</b>
<b>Contact Centre</b>				
Customer Service Officers	7.8	2	25	2 Essential 5.8 Desirable
<b>One Stop Shops</b>				
Customer Service Officers	10.7	3	28	1 Essential 9.7 Desirable

The number of Welsh speakers remains the same as last year although the overall numbers of staff working within Customer Services has decreased.

Customer Services staff work across three different locations (two face to face and one telephone based) to provide a first point of contact enquiry service for the Council. There are 3 bilingual staff whose first language is Welsh and 2 bilingual staff who can converse competently in Welsh to deal with first point of contact enquiries. Any further training needs for Welsh language delivery would be fully supported by the service managers.

During 23013/14 we looked to enhance the way in which residents in Pontardawe accessed services through the One Stop Shop with Welsh language provision a core consideration. As a result of the changes at Pontardawe Welsh language provision has been enhanced. We will continue to monitor and evaluate the service.

There is a dedicated Welsh language line for the Council’s switchboard provision which is published alongside the English line contact details on general Council correspondence and on the Council’s website.

Although not ideal Language Line and Google Translate can be accessed to assist in providing solutions to temporary limitations in services.

**Welsh Language Training**

The Council can access four levels of Welsh language courses for its employees, which provides them with open college network accreditation. The table that follows includes Welsh language courses that commenced in September 2013 and the number of employees that are committed to attend.

**WLI 4 (a): The number of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level.**

There are currently 2 employees undertaking training, both in year 5/6.

As previously mentioned we will continue with the Dosbarth Nos training until all of the current participants have concluded their 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> year.

All future participants who have identified a need for Welsh language training will be assessed on the needs of the service, and the type of training which would be most suited to the service requirements e.g. if a more intense training is required, then the preferred option may be to consider undertaking an intensive Wlpan course.

## **Language Awareness Training**

### Customer Care Training

The Council runs a Customer Care and Telephone Skills Course, which is a one day training course that is open to all employees. The course defines customer care, looks at the consequences of good and poor service and helps participants to develop communication skills. Part of the course also raises awareness about the requirements of the Scheme.

### Social Work Degree

Social Work students seconded and hosted by the Council receive 'Welsh Language Awareness in Neath Port Talbot' training. The course is run biennially. The course raises awareness of the use of the Welsh language across the geographical areas of Neath Port Talbot based on the latest census information and looks at the equal opportunities that staff working in social care should provide to users accessing services.

Welsh language, culture and its context is an integral part of the degree course in Wales and Welsh context and practice must be sufficiently evidenced. We have practice learning opportunities that can be offered through the medium of Welsh with practice assessors able to complete the assessment process in Welsh.

### Practice and Consolidation Programme

As part of social workers First Year in Practice Programme newly qualified social workers are asked to reflect on their experience of working in Neath Port Talbot. This includes considering Welsh context in Neath Port Talbot and how they apply policy and procedure. This allows the opportunity for reflection especially for those newly qualified social workers who have not studied in this area or who studied in England.

Newly qualified social workers entering their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of practice are required to undertake a consolidation programme. Neath Port Talbot CBC is part of the 'Porth Agored' partnership. The Porth Agored partnership is responsible for the writing, development and implementation of the consolidation programme and work in conjunction with University of South Wales, Trinity Saint David.

The consolidation programme can be undertaken in both Welsh and English and the partnership has sufficient resources to offer this. In addition a section of the required portfolio is 'Characteristics and needs of Wales, its languages, culture, geography and institutions'. Candidates are required to compose a timeline to show the historical context of the Welsh language including legislation and policy and are asked to reflect on the timeline with examples from their social work practice.

### Multi-Agency and Foster Carer Training

Welsh language awareness is included where possible on any multi-agency and assessment training. Case studies used are set in a context of Welsh language and emphasise the need for use with particular vulnerable adults and children whose first language is Welsh, and the need to provide services to gain an accurate reflection or assessment as well as if the service is request in the medium of Welsh e.g. Children whose first language is Welsh or service users with dementia.

### Health and Social Care Diploma

All candidates enrolled to complete Health and Social Care Diploma (Level 3-5) must complete the mandatory unit 'Promote equality and inclusion in health, social care or children's and young people's settings'. They are encouraged to consider Welsh language, context and to provide evidence as part of their portfolios. Through standardisation internal assessors working in Neath Port Talbot will focus on ensuring that the need to consider services for citizens through Welsh is explored as part of the assessment process.

### **WLI 4 (b): The number of staff who have received language awareness training (Customer Care and Telephone Skills)**

<b>Service</b>	<b>2013/2014 No. Employees</b>
Chief Executive's	7
Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning	5
Environment	2
Finance & Corporate Services	0
Social Services, Health & Housing	2
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

Advice and support is also given to individuals and teams as and when needed. The Council will continue to provide language awareness opportunities as and when required.

### **Linguistic Skills**

Applicants are asked to complete an equalities questionnaire as part of the recruitment process and the information is recorded on Vision, the Council's personnel and payroll system, on appointment.

The following information has been collated for all services using the Vision System. The tables below summarise the percentage and number of staff who are Welsh speakers and learners spilt via service and grade.

As stated above the data currently held is recorded on appointment and a data cleanse exercise is currently under way to improve the information held.

**WLI 5: The number and percentage of staff within the Council's services who are able to speak Welsh (excluding school teachers and school based staff)**

**% of staff within the Council's Service who are Welsh speakers according to service division and grades of post**

Division	SCP 4-11		SCP 12-22		SCP 23-33		SCP 34-44		SCP 45+	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Business Strategy & Public Protection	2	33.3	3	16.6	6	14.6	2	10	0	0
Children and Young People's Services	0	0	1	5.5	11	12.9	9	9	0	0
Community Care & Housing Services	5	16.1	40	10.9	12	13.7	11	11.5	0	0
Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services	0	0	1	10	3	21.4	0	0	0	0
Engineering and Transport	5	8.1	1	5.8	4	12.1	1	6.6.	1	16.6
Financial Services	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	5.2	0	0
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	1	7.1	0	0	0	0
ICT	0	0	0	0	1	5.2	1	4.3	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer	0	0	2	25	0	0	1	4.3	1	16.6
Partnership and Community Development	6	12.2	9	7.8	8	9	0	0	0	0
Planning	0	0	0	0	4	26.6	3	21.4	0	0
Property and Regeneration	7	8.1	0	0	7	15.2	2	9.5	1	13.3
Schools Inclusion & Lifelong Learning Development	0	0	4	22.2	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Wales Trunk Road Agency	0	0	1	9	3	6.8	2	11.1	0	0
Streetcare Services	5	6.7	6	9.2	10	13.3	1	8.3	2	
Support Services & Commissioning Development	47	7.9	4	5.2	12	12.2	3	12	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>



**% of staff within the Council's Service who are Welsh learners according to service division and grades of posts**

Division	SCP 4-11		SCP 12-22		SCP 23-33		SCP 34-44		SCP 45+	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Business Strategy & Public Protection	0	0	3	16.6	5	12.1	2	10	0	0
Children and Young People's Services	0	0	2	11.1	13	15.2	9	9	2	28.5
Community Care & Housing Services	0	0	21	5.7	12	13.7	19	20	3	30
Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services	0	0	1	10.	2	14.2	2	22.2	1	100
Economic Development & Valleys Programme	0	0	0	0	2	66.6	0	0	0	0
Engineering & Transport	1	1.6	1	5.8	5	15.1	0	0	1	16.6
Financial Services	0	0	2	22.2	4	8.1	0	0	0	0
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	2	14.2	0	0	1	33.3
ICT	0	0	1	33.3	1	5.2	4	17.3	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer	1	11.1	1	12.5	0	0	4	17.3	2	18.1
Partnership & Community Development	4	8.1	12	10.5	13	14.7	1	5.5	3	60
Planning	0	0	0	0	2	13.3	1	7.1	1	33.3
Property and Regeneration	1	1.1	1	12.5	6	13	3	14.2	2	33.3
Schools Inclusion & Lifelong Learning Development	1	33.3	4	22.2	7	23.3	3	60	0	0
South Wales Trunk Road Agency	0	0	0	0	5	11.3	0	0	1	33.3
Streetcare Services	1	1.3	5	7.6	11	14.6	1	8.3	4	26.6
Support Services & Commissioning Development	37	6.2	3	3.9	1	1	3	12	1	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26.8</b>

NB: Figures do not include Heads of Service or Corporate Directors.

## **Youth Services and Think Family Partnership**

As reported last year changes to funding have impacted on the breadth of activity the Youth Service has been able to provide to promote Welsh language and culture during 2013/14.

Youth Clubs continue to promote bilingualism and Welsh culture through a range of activities. Some examples of work that have taken place in Youth Clubs during 2013/14 are:-

- A Youth Club trip to the Ospreys v London Wasps rugby game at the Liberty Stadium;
- St David's Day Quizzes and Welsh Arts and Crafts sessions;
- Santes Dwynwen Day, individuals' interpretation of the myths that surround the day and associated craft activities;
- Welsh Bingo, using Welsh numbers and phrases;
- Welsh language sessions. Staff and young people have been speaking in Welsh for a whole session to encourage its use within Clubs. One member of staff has been receiving support and guidance from young people in relation to her learning Welsh.

The service continues to part fund a Menter Iaith Youth Officer who uses a good range of activities and methods to promote the Welsh language and to enable young people to access fun and learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The Youth Service funding directly enabled the officer to reach 232 young people through 'Stafell Stwnsh sessions at YG Ystalyfera of which 124 young people were new to the Youth Service.

Indirectly, the funding has also enabled the officer to provide several Welsh language awareness workshops at St Joseph's Comprehensive School, Pontardawe Primary School, Neath College, Dyffryn School and Glanafan School. This reached a further 376 young people from years 5 to years 13.

Other groups and activities supported by this funding include:

'Clwb Roc' was set up at YG Ystalyfera. Four bands have been established and it is hoped these bands will compete in 'Brwydr y Bandiau Radio Cymru C2 2014'.

20 young people attend 'Gigs y Gwach' every month and small committee, including 5 young people, agreed the programme. 130 young people attended 'Gŵyl y Gwach' this year.

In November over 40 young people attended the television programme 'Jonathan' and a further 20 young people attended the programme in February.

Clwb Perfformio Aelwyd Twrw Tawe for young people in years 5-9 established in partnership with Menter Iaith Abertawe.

The Youth Service has supported the work related curriculum delivered at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera by providing youth worker support in mock interviews for young people. An additional 10 young people from the alternative curriculum were rewarded for their good work on the programme and, as part of their Welsh awareness curriculum, with a trip to the Wales vs Tonga match. They were joined by 10 young people from the Youth Clubs in the Afan Valley and 9 young people from the Families First project. This was an experience that the young people were unlikely to have without youth work support.

### Childcare

The recent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment that was carried out highlighted a limited demand for bilingual Childcare services but it did highlight that we needed to work with English medium settings to increase the use of the Welsh language within those settings.

21 Welsh medium/bilingual childcare services are available across the county borough.

## **5. Standard of Welsh Language Services**

### **WLI 6 Number of complaints received in relation to the operation of the Language Scheme and the percentage dealt with in accordance with the Council's corporate standards**

During 2013/14 a number of complaints were received in connection with the Welsh language.

The outstanding complaint re non bilingual penalty charge notices was finally resolved. We worked closely with our software and ticket suppliers during 2013/2014 to overcome a number of issues and bilingual Penalty Charge Notices were introduced in March 2014 and the complaint with the Welsh Language Commissioner was closed.

The details of the complaints are outlined below.

#### **Complaints Received:**

- Penalty Charge Notice–
  - Correspondence was received regarding the introduction of bilingual penalty charge notices. A response was sent providing information on the measures being taken and a proposed date for the introduction of bilingual penalty charge notices
- Website –
  - A complaint was received highlighting the limitations of the Welsh pages on our website. This matter was being considered as part of a wider a review of the website which aims to streamline content and provide greater online self service applications. As response was sent to this effect.

- Leaflets –
  - The complaint was in respect of English only leaflets distributed by Welsh medium schools. This matter was to be reviewed by the individual services as well as being part of wider deliberations by the education service.
- Notices/posters -
  - This was in relation to a notice and poster being in English only. The matter was rectified by producing a bilingual notice. The poster was due to be produced bilingually but was withdrawn as it was not intended for the public.
- Receipts –
  - This related to a receipt that was only partly bilingual. While acknowledging that the situation is not ideal work would not begin to address the matter in the current climate.

A complaint was also received from an individual that covered a number of issues. Further correspondence in relation to the complaint was received from the Welsh Language Commissioner to whom the matter had been referred. Following a response to the Welsh Language Commissioner no further action was required.

The detail of the complaint is outlined below:

- Correspondence – this related to English only correspondence where language choice had already been made. Work to promote internally the Public Directory for Welsh Correspondence to be undertaken.
- Signage – errors in the Welsh translation, unequal size text, English only signs. These are to be rectified as part of the Council’s usual maintenance programme.
- Leaflets – English only tourism leaflets. The content and design of each leaflet determines bilingual or separate language versions.
- Car permits – English only car permits. This is currently being considered as the next part of the review into the introduction of bilingual penalty charge notices
- Website – English only web pages. This was being considered as part of a wider a review of the website which aims to streamline content and provide greater online self service applications.
- Frontline services – inability to carry out business in Welsh. This matter was to be considered as part of a wider review in relation to the introduction on the proposed Welsh Language Standards.
- Road markings – English only road markings. The service confirmed that road safety considerations outweighed strict compliance with our Scheme.

While provision of simultaneous translation at Council meetings had always been a feature of the Council’s Welsh Language Scheme no request to utilise it had been received. However, following a query received by an elected member in April 2013, and associated complaint from the Welsh Language Commissioner, and

consultation with political groups simultaneous translation facilities have been made available for the 8 scheduled Council meetings during the Civic Year

All complaints were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy which includes being dealt with within the agreed timescales and where this is not possible, informing complainants of the reasons why and indicating when a full response will be provided by.

## **6. Analysing Performance and Publishing Information**

### **Implementation of Action Plans and Timetable**

The Annual Monitoring Report and Corporate Action Plan will continue to be scrutinised. The attached Corporate Action Plan (Appendix 2) summarises progress against the action plan.

Annual Monitoring Reports are published on the Council's website.

As requested a summary of successes and areas of improvement identified during 2013/14 is below.

### **Summary of successes**

- We have made translation facilities available as the norm for the 8 scheduled Council meetings during the Civic Year. This change has enabled us to better reflect the equal status of the Welsh Language in transacting its business; but at the same time respond proportionately to ensure that any new arrangements represent value for money in these times of austerity.
- As a result of the changes at Pontardawe One Stop we have been able to enhance Welsh language provision for people accessing services.
- We have begun work to determine the relevance and appropriateness of the information contained on the website as well as existence of equivalent Welsh web pages.
- All complaints received during 2013/14 were dealt with in accordance with the Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy, which includes being dealt with within the agreed timescales.

### **Summary of areas for improvement**

- Continue to develop further opportunities for language awareness.
- Improve monitoring and compliance of the Council's website, which remains a priority action in the 2013/2016 action plan.
- Consider linguistic skills as part of the 'More Than Just Words' Strategy/Action Plan.

## **7. Statement on Welsh Language Standards**

This Council is committed to promoting the Welsh language and Welsh culture, however, there is no capacity to extend our existing Welsh Language Scheme in any meaningful way at the present time when the whole of the public sector in Wales faces such a challenging outlook.

Application of the Standards would create significant additional financial and human resources pressures on this Council if they were to be applied in full. In the current financial climate, such a course of action would be unreasonable and disproportionate. It is also the case that the general moratorium on external recruitment, as we are forced to downsize, makes work to increase linguistic capability in our workforce very difficult indeed.

**Welsh Language Scheme Corporate Action Plan**

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>MAINSTREAMING</b>						
<b>1</b>	Revision of the Equality Impact Assessment process which will continue to include Welsh language.	2013/14	✓			This has been further revised to include Community Cohesion, guidance which includes reference to the challenges facing Welsh Speaking communities
<b>1a</b>	Produce a 'How to...' guide on Equality Impact Assessments which will continue to include Welsh language	2013/14	✓			Guidance although not in this particular format, has been produced and has been circulated to Senior Management. The guidance and Equality Impact Assessment forms have been forwarded to officers who are responsible for undertaking Equality Impact Assessment as well as being available for all staff via the Intranet.
<b>1b</b>	Produce a 'How to...' guide on Accessible Communications to include Welsh language	2013/14	✓			Guidance has been produced and is available to staff through the intranet
<b>1c</b>	Circulate information on the service provided by the Welsh Language Translation Unit	2013/14	✓			We have developed and produced a number of 'How to...' guides which includes information on how to access the translation service. The service provided by the Welsh Language Translation Unit has also been publicised in our internal newsletter, In The Loop.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
1d	Impact Assessments - Lessons Learnt training/advice/support to include Welsh Language	2013/15	✓			Lessons learnt have been discussed and shared with Senior Officers. This is ongoing work and will continue to be developed as more Impact Assessments are undertaken.
1e	Consider the development of an Equality Impact Assessment template/guidance for collaborative projects in South and South West Wales Region	2013/15		✓		The South West Wales Regional Equality Group is currently working on developing a template for use on collaborative projects. The Group is supported by the WLGA and its recommendations will be considered by the Heads of Policy All Wales Group.
<b>DEALING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND PROCUREMENT</b>						
2	Social Services, Health and Housing to undertake exercises to meet the Welsh Language Commission's best practice guidance as detailed in "Contracting out Public Service Contracts and the Welsh Language".	2013/14		✓		The Social Care Health and Housing Department has undertaken a survey with a sample of external providers on their Welsh language provision. This survey will continue each year on a sample of different providers until all have been surveyed.
2a	Ensure that reference to and inclusion of equalities and the Welsh language is taken into account when procuring services, including the work on the Programme for Improving Corporate Systems (PICS)	2013/14		✓		Reference to and inclusion of equalities and the Welsh language are included in tender documentation. We are mindful of these requirements when dealing with both internal and external providers and will work to ensure this continues.



Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>FRONTLINE SERVICES AND LINGUISTIC SKILLS</b>						
<b>3</b>	To consider the Welsh Language Commission's guidance on the "Assessment of Linguistic Skills" as part of the Council's recruitment process.	2013/14 2014/15		✓		With the current general moratorium on external recruitment this work has been interrupted.
<b>3a</b>	Update 'A Guide to the Designation of Posts' in light of the advice document 'Recruitment: Welsh Language Considerations'	2013/14 2014/15			✓	The current general moratorium on external recruitment makes work to increase linguistic capability in our workforce very difficult and has delayed work in relation to this action.
<b>3b</b>	Social Services to consider language and recruitment as part of the 'More than Just Words' Strategy and Action Plan	2013/15		✓		'Welsh Language Awareness in Neath Port Talbot' is a core element in the Social Work Degree Course. This includes raising language awareness and looks at the equal opportunities that staff working in social care should provide to those accessing services. As part of the 'More than Just Words' action plan work has begun to marry together geographic, service user and staff language profiles. Further consideration will be given to language and recruitment when this part of the work is completed.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
4	Develop language awareness opportunities.	2013/14 2014/15			✓	We will be working with Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot to look at the feasibility of work around using language skills in the workplace.
4a	Include Welsh language as an item in the Equalities Conference	2013/14 2014/15		✓		The Conference was unable to be held during 2013/14 but is scheduled to be held during 2014/15. This delay offers an opportunity for careful consideration of the impact of any proposed Standards.
4b	Identify further relevant training opportunities to incorporate language awareness	2013/15		✓		Discussions are to be held with Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot to identify language awareness opportunities as well as confidence building opportunities for staff to use Welsh within the Council.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
5	Welsh language to be considered at a future Children and Young People's Partnership Management Group meeting	2014/15		✓		<p>The Children and Young People's Partnership was formally dissolved and replaced with a new Think Family Partnership under the auspices of the Local Service Board.</p> <p>With the changes taking place this action has been deferred to 2014/15 next year.</p> <p>The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment identified limited demand for bilingual childcare services. However, it highlighted the need to work with English medium childcare service providers to increase the use of the Welsh language within those settings.</p>

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>STANDARDS OF WELSH LANGUAGE SERVICES</b>						
6	Monitor and improve website compliance with the Scheme.	2013/14 2014/15		✓		<p>This large piece of work is currently in progress. Work has begun to determine the relevance and appropriateness of the information contained on the website as well as existence of equivalent Welsh web pages.</p> <p>We are currently working to bring the content of our website up to date.</p> <p>In order to ensure the website is fit for purpose we are undertaking a systematic review of the most frequently viewed web pages. Officers from the identified service areas are working on updating their information as well as ensuring it is translated and available on the appropriate Welsh web pages.</p> <p>By concentrating our efforts to ensure the most frequently viewed web pages are relevant, up to date and available in both languages we will be able to provide a more effective service which meets people's needs.</p>
6a	Update, revise and translate home page	2013/14 2014/15		✓		
6b	Identify most accessed areas	2013/14 2014/15		✓		
6c	Revise and translate most accessed areas	2013/14 2014/15		✓		

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
6d	Update the website with new bilingual 'self service' applications: Bulk Collections Pest Control Pot Holes Refuse and Recycling Equipment Street Lighting	2013/14 2014/15		✓		While the information is available in Welsh information there appears to be some technical issues with the request forms, appointments and payment area of the webpage. We are continuing to work to identify solutions to these problems
6e	Develop an Online Strategy ensuring that new and current content is bilingual with a target of a fully bilingual website	2014/16		✓		This will considered as part of the ongoing work with the website
7	Review Fixed Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) (Parking)	2013/14	✓			The software requirements and costs associated with producing bilingual penalty charge notices for parking enforcement were considered. Discussions with our software and ticket suppliers identified a realistic timescale. The timescale for the introduction of bilingual Penalty Charge Notices was longer than anticipated but was unavoidable due to the suppliers' workload. Fixed Penalty Charge Notices for parking enforcement were introduced in March 2014.
7a	Bilingual PCN Penalty Charge Notices to be introduced	2013/14	✓			
7b	Meeting with software supplier	2013/14	✓			
7c	Identify costs and implementation date	2013/14	✓			

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE AND MONITORING PROGRESS</b>						
8	Continue to promote and develop the network of employees who are Welsh speakers and learners.	2013/14 2014/15			✓	Due to a large number of changes in personnel during the year we have not been able to progress this action. However with the anticipated work with Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot and the work to meet action 8a we hope to aim to progress this action during 2014/15
8a	Review the Network in light of recent personnel changes	2013/14 2014/15			✓	It was anticipated that a review would take place during 2013/14 however further personnel changes took place and were not finalised until March 2014. Therefore the review has been delayed until 2014/15.
8b	Utilise the internal communication mechanisms to promote equalities, Welsh language and the network e.g. In the Loop,	2013/14	✓			The requirements under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Scheme and its requirements, along with the 'How to...' guides, have been publicised in our internal newsletter, In The Loop.  The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report and the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report are presented to the Heads of Service Equalities Group for consideration prior to the formal reporting process.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE AND MONITORING PROGRESS (Cont)</b>						
8b (Cont)		2013/14	✓			<p>The work undertaken with officers on Equality Impact Assessments as part of the Forward Financial Plan/Budget process has raised the profile of equalities issues including the Welsh language.</p> <p>We are committed to promoting the Welsh language and Welsh culture and while there is no capacity to extend our existing Scheme in any meaningful way we will consider the promotion of the Welsh language as part of the overall consideration on the impact of the Welsh Language Standards</p>
8c	Reinforce the requirement for bilingual communications in the Council's Communication Strategy	2013/14	✓			As part of the ongoing work in relation to our Communication Strategy we have developed and produced a number of 'How to...' guides, available on the intranet, which include guidelines on bilingual communication.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
8d	Develop an editorial policy, to clarify certain issues, to be read in conjunction with the current Welsh Language Scheme	2013/14			✓	We have considered it a better use of resources to delay this work and develop guidance for use in conjunction with the Standards.
8e	Identify opportunities to promote and develop the network, e.g. equalities conference	2013/14		✓		The Equalities Conference is now to be held during 2014/15.
8f	Review the Welsh Language Scheme Employee Guidance	2013/14 2014/15			✓	Given that wholesale changes would need to be made over the forthcoming months it was considered more appropriate to focus on this work following the introduction of the Standards.  The Welsh Language Scheme and its requirements, along with the 'How to...' guides, have been publicised in our internal newsletter, In The Loop, to help raise staff awareness.
8g	Revise the Welsh Language Employee Guidance in line with New Standards	2015/16			✓	Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation



Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed			Comment
			Yes	In Part	No	
<b>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLANS AND TIMETABLE</b>						
9	Implement the Welsh Language Commission's final version of the Standards, once published.	2014/15			✓	Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation.
9a	Review Single Integrated Plan following publication of the Standards	2014/15			✓	Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation

**KEY – Action Completed - RAG status**

Yes	In Part	No