



CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.00 PM WEDNESDAY, 5 APRIL 2023

***MULTI-LOCATION MEETING - COUNCIL CHAMBER, PORT TALBOT
AND MICROSOFT TEAMS***

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Part 1

1. Chairs Announcements
2. Declarations of Interests
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 20*)
 - 19.01.2023
 - 22.02.2023
 - 1.03.2023
4. Report of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group (*Pages 21 - 80*)
5. Pre-decision Scrutiny
 - To select appropriate items from the Cabinet agenda for pre-decision scrutiny (cabinet reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members)
6. Forward Work Programme 2022/23 (*Pages 81 - 82*)

7. Urgent Items

Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100BA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Thursday, 30 March 2023

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor P.Rogers

**Vice
Chairperson: Councillor C.James**

Councillors: T.Bowen, C.Clement-Williams, C.Galsworthy,
J.Henton, J.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.Paddison,
C.Phillips, R.Phillips, S.Pursey, S.H.Reynolds,
A.J.Richards and M.Spooner

Notes:

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though*

Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.

- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

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Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot and
Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

19 January 2023

Chairperson: Councillor P.Rogers

Vice Chairperson: Councillor C.James

Councillors: T.Bowen, C.Clement-Williams, C.Galsworthy,
J.Henton, R.G.Jones, C.Lewis, S.Paddison,
C.Phillips, R.Phillips, S.Pursey, S.H.Reynolds,
A.J.Richards and M.Spooner

Officers In Attendance K.Jones, A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, N.Pearce,
C.Griffiths, H.Jones, A.Thomas, Ms.L.Willis,
C.Furlow-Harris, A.James, C.John and
J.Woodman-Ralph

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors W.F.Griffiths, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley,
N.Jenkins, S.Jones, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn
and D.M.Peters

Observers

1. **Chairs Announcements**

The Chair welcomed the Committee.

2. **Declarations of Interests**

There were none.

3. **Pre-decision Scrutiny**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following item on the Cabinet agenda:

2023/24 Budget Proposals for Consultation

Members were provided with information in relation to the sought approval to consult on the draft budget proposals for 2023/24 from Cabinet. It was noted that due to the timing of the provisional local government settlement, a short consultation would take place up until the 10th February 2023. Responses following the consultation would be reviewed prior to presenting a final budget for 2023/24 at Cabinet and Council on 1st and 2nd March respectively, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members queried officers in relation to the following points as detailed within the report:

- It was queried whether the 2.8 Million Renewable Energy Transition Fund was specifically for renewable energy or whether this fund would cover other areas. Officers explained that the proposal was to put aside 2.8 million as we need to reach a net zero target over the next 7 years. It was noted that if this proposal were to be accepted then members would receive further reports in relation to any utilisation of that fund.
- It was noted that within the risk register, waste delivery was marked as a high risk due to fuel inflation costs. Members asked what mitigating measures were being utilised to support this. Officers explained that fuel had decreased following this risk being highlighted therefore there is no proposal to amend waste delivery. Members asked that this risk be amended to reflect this within the risk register.
- Members discussed the impact of the pay award. Members required assurance around the proposal of the schools Pay award. It was noted that within this year's budget it was agreed that the gap of 4% would be paid. For the proposal detailed within next year's budget it was discussed that the full 5% would be provided through School reserves.
- Officers discussed the proposal around the saving costs of Cleaning within schools. It was noted that the proposal was to cut the subsidy for school cleaning as it was felt that this was a responsibility for the schools themselves to cover.
- It was noted that an analysis was being produced to provide detail around the schools that may have difficulty balancing budgets with upcoming budget pressures resulting in them

being in a potential deficit. Members asked that the analysis be circulated once completed.

- Members highlighted their frustration around the lateness of the consultation document being circulated in a timely manner. Officers apologised for any inconvenience however, explained that the document that would be presented to the public would be the main budget report that was attached. It was also noted that they would maximise public engagement to maximise consultation responses. It was clear during the discussion that members felt the importance of ensuring that the report was clear to ensure the public had a clear understanding of the outcomes of the budget proposals. Therefore officers also ensured that they would provide explanatory notes with the budget document when it is taken to consultation.
- Members also recognised within previous budget reports directorate codes were listed against each proposals to allow members to monitor and compare budget proposals. It was requested that these codes be included within the final document. Officers confirmed that this would be included within the future document.
- Members asked when they would receive the Celtic Leisure Business Plan, as this would help them in determining the budget proposals for leisure. Officers confirmed that it would be available for them to receive.
- Members queried the £30,000 that would be required to fund Gnoll Park. Officers explained that they had secured funding which would better the Gnoll Park and allow the park to gain a profit which would therefore not require a subsidy in future.
- Discussions took place around reserves and utilising reserves. It was noted that reserves would be used in instances where there had been a pressure, however, with forward planning it would be required to consider whether this pressure would be ongoing and if so would require further consideration of funding to prevent utilising reserves to cover ongoing costs.
- Members queried the proposal to increase fees and charges by 10%. Officers explained that this wouldn't necessarily mean that all fees and charges would increase by 10% it would be a capped at 10% for those fees and charges.

- Members queried the proposals around the review of the Buildings and asked whether this saving would be included within 2023/24. Officers explained that the review is ultimately trying to be cost effective while trying to ensure that the public service wasn't affected and to ensure this was still provided effectively. Therefore, consideration was being taken around the buildings themselves and future use of those buildings as well as the generic utility savings such as, turning off lights etc.
- It was requested that members, officers and report writers ensure that they refrain from utilising acronyms to ensure the public has an understanding of the discussion and any information that is provided within the consultation process.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the recommendations to Cabinet.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Approval of strategic 'anchor projects

Members were informed of the Neath Port Talbot strategic 'anchor' projects to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which was subject to approval following Cabinet, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members received a power point presentation from officers providing further detail of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the strategic Anchor Projects.

Members commended officers for the work that had been achieved by officers in relation to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Following scrutiny, the committee were supportive of the recommendations to Cabinet.

CHAIRPERSON

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot and
Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

22 February 2023

Chairperson: Councillor P.Rogers

Councillors: T.Bowen, C.Clement-Williams, J.Henton,
R.G.Jones, S.Paddison, S.Purseley,
S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards and M.Spooner

Officers In Attendance K.Jones, A.Jarrett, N.Pearce, C.Griffiths,
H.Jones, R.Crowhurst, N.Blackmore, C.Furlow-
Harris, L.McAndrew, J.Woodman-Ralph and
C.John

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors W.F.Griffiths, S.Harris, S.K.Hunt,
J.Hurley, N.Jenkins, S.Jones, S.A.Knoyle,
A.Llewelyn, D.M.Peters and J.Hale

1. **Chairs Announcements**

There were none.

2. **Declarations of Interests**

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 October 2022, 21
November 2022 and 30 November 2022 were approved as an
accurate record.

4. **Pre-decision Scrutiny**

Cabinet Scrutiny scrutinised the following Cabinet items:

Self-Assessment 2021/2022

Members received information on the Council's draft self-assessment for 2021/2022. The Council is required to publish the self-assessment within 4 weeks of approval as per the circulated report.

Members commented on the amount of detail in the report and suggested the idea of having a conclusion at the start to get a better overview at the beginning of reports. Officers advised that they had a statutory requirement to include specific details but advised that they will be introducing an easy read version when they publish. Officers also advised that they will take on board comments about having a summary at the beginning of reports, when they put together the 2022/23 assessment.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

Establishment of Liaison Forum in Respect to Afan Valley Adventure Resort

Members were informed of the request of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited, to establish a liaison forum with representatives of Wildfox Resorts Afan Valley Limited in respect of the development of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort. The main purpose of the liaison forum is to ensure the maximisation of the social, environmental, and economic benefits of the Afan Valley Adventure Resort for the local communities, as per the report.

Members expressed concerns relating to both items 8 and 9 of the Cabinet agenda pack. It was noted that the valley's community impact and workforce impact for both reports detailed that there were no implications. Members felt that there would be considerable workforce impacts in relation to the reports due to administrative support that would be required from relevant departments.

Members also felt that there may be an impact on other wards and consideration of including members from the Lower Afan valley on the liaison committee would be beneficial. Officers explained that it would be open to members who had been appointed to the appropriate forums to identify if there are any issues that could have neighbouring impacts on adjacent wards and the terms of reference can always be reconsidered in those forums.

Members also queried the possibility of having the minutes of the liaison forum circulated to the Scrutiny Chairs. Officers advised that

as the liaison committees are outside bodies, the minutes would not be circulated to all representatives of the council. Officers further suggested that as part of the forward work program of scrutiny, that the council find ways to make sure chairs were regularly kept updated and to try and find ways to put standing items on agendas and consider those matters.

Officers took on board the points raised and advised that when looking at the valley and workforce impacts the reason there were no impacts recorded on the report was due to the purpose of the report detailing the set up in general, relating specifically to the governance framework that has been put in place and the terms of reference. It was noted that further reports detailing the works of the projects would include the appropriate impacts.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

Establishment of an Advisory Panel in Respect of the Global Centre for Rail Excellence

Members were informed of the Establishment of an advisory panel in respect of the Global Centre of Rail Excellence and the terms of reference of the Global Centre of Rail Excellence Advisory Panel established by GCRE Ltd. They also were asked to agree Council representatives to the various committees established by the Advisory Panel, following a request by GCRE Ltd, as per the circulated report.

The main discussion for this item took place under Item 8. Members noted that they would need to make sure that NPT Representatives on those committees are aware of concerns of locals so that they can represent them fully.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board

Phase One of the Accommodation Review.

Members were advised that officers were seeking approval to close five of the Neath Port Talbot Council's operational staff-based office accommodation buildings and declare them surplus to operational requirements with effect from 31st March 2023 as per the report.

Officers explained the purpose of this accommodation review is to enable the local authority to reduce the number of buildings the authority is occupying because not only is the authority paying rent on those, but also the energy usage and other resulting utility bills associated with those occupied buildings. Reducing the buildings would help to drive down costs so that services can be protected and to ensure that sustainability principles that the authority, the UK government, and Welsh government want to achieve which is a secure Net Zero carbon by 2030 are being met.

Officers stated that they will be looking to utilise the buildings that are being retained in the long term as they do not want to move staff into another building which is going to cost the authority to operate or alternatively move them into another building that may form part of a later phase of the accommodation strategy. Officers stated that this is just Phase One of a multi-phased strategy.

Members sought clarification and detail on the issue on page 91/92 of the report, where up to six rooms in Cimla hospital being retained for specialist training purposes for social services and wanted more detail on why and whether there is a timeline in place and a process for arranging relocation.

Officers advised that the rooms have been retained for manual handling training and a timeframe for officers to take out that specialist equipment and relocate it has not been decided, however officers will let the committee know as soon as soon as they have one. Officers also provided a brief explanation of what staff would be moving and where they would be moving to in relation to social services.

There was a discussion about the detail of the report with members suggesting that the report should have had detailed breakdowns on each proposal and an explanation on the saving costs of the closure of buildings or the surrendering of the lease. Officers agreed to provide a more detailed breakdown for members and circulate them after the meeting along with further detail being included in future reports.

There was a discussion around the security and ongoing costs of keeping and maintain empty buildings until they are sold. Officers advised that not all properties would require security to be present. The properties would be inspected once vacated to ensure that they

are secure, and the authority will have a care and maintenance responsibility for them going forward.

Members were advised that the authority will have service charges and buildings will still need to be heated while they're empty to prevent any damp penetration and disrepair. Officers advised that compared to the costs incurred by buildings fully occupied or partially occupied it will be significantly less.

There was a discussion around potential implications for the ending of leases with CVS which could cause knock on affects for local people and cause costs moving forward. Officers said that in preliminary discussion with the organisations who own the buildings, there would not be an adverse impact upon those owners because of the authority removing itself from the leased property.

Members questioned how the report achieves its savings in regard to the £158,000. Members wanted to understand if that included business rates and if it assumes the immediate sale of those two buildings quickly. Members felt there was detail lacking in terms of whether the report assumes that the authority will still have the two properties for 12 months. Members felt it there was not enough detail to understand what it is they were agreeing to and that the report has been used in a line of a budget to balance the budget but there is no guarantee that it will come through to fruition. Members expressed concerns that there should be more detail within that budget paper and asked that this information is circulated to all members of council as it is relevant to the budget that will be decided in Council in March.

Officers explained that in the report there are several assumptions that have been built into the costs, as officers will not know the outcome as it's all associated with the marketing of that property. Officers advised that the responsibility approving the sale of properties rests with the cabinet board for decision. Members expressed concerns that without knowing whether the assumption that has been used on the cost saving relies on sales happening and some members were uncomfortable that they may recommend a decision that may result the sale of a building without considering other options.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board with One member voting against the recommendation.

Capital Budget Monitoring Report 22/23 as of the End of December 2022

Members were provided with information in relation to the delivery of the 2022/23 Capital Programme as per the report.

Officers also provided an overview of the report advising that it is the monitoring report for the capital program as at the end of December. It detailed that the previous Capital programme agreed by Cabinet was 70.4 million pounds this report proposes a new capital programme for this year of 54 million pounds with a number of amendments detailed in the report showing the changes from the previously approved budget to the one proposed in front of Cabinet.

Members raised concerns in relation to the number of areas that are listed for reprofile and the number of under-spends throughout the report. Members highlighted 29 areas of reprofiling at an estimate of £21,000,000 for the capital projects next year. Members highlighted the Disabled Facilities Grant, City Deal, Margam Park, Supported Living and school maintenance as areas they wanted clarity on.

Officers agreed that there was a significant amount of reprofiling. Officers explained that with the Disabled Facilities Grants there was a significant amount of budget carried forward from 2021/22 due to an inability to get contractors to work during the pandemic, which was added to the 22/23 budget. Due to capacity of the supply chain, it was reprofiled again because again they cannot get people to do the work.

Officers explained that there is limited capacity within the regeneration team in relation to the City Deal, and difficulties in being able to recruit suitable people to the project teams. Officers have been working throughout the year in terms of the Shared Prosperity Fund bids, the Levelling Up Fund bids, the Wild Fox resort etc, which means that some of those City deal projects have had to move into next year.

Officers also advised that in terms of some of the school programme, the Welsh government has allocated additional money during the year, so that has moved the money into next year. This means that the authority is spending some Welsh government money instead. Officers also explained that there is a limited window where you can undertake Capital work in schools so there is a capacity and a profiling issue.

In relation to supported living, officers explained that it is a contribution the authority is making towards a project that City and County of Swansea are running, which means a delay in terms of contribution to that project.

In relation to Margam Park, officers advised that there is further work being undertaken in terms of the project there, with the report due back before and the relevant cabinet board soon.

Members wanted to know what officers are doing to address the lack of workforce in relation to implement Capital Works programs going forward.

Officers explained that the authority has strengthened several functions in the environment directorate across Planning, Highways and Regeneration and that the authority will be looking to do the same with the shared Prosperity fund monies that they have got.

It was also explained that there will be a proposal coming forward in the next couple of months around some of the more strategic Investments the authority has got and a reshaping of the way in which the authority responds to those.

Further proposals will emerge in the next couple of months meaning that resources for the larger projects are limited. It was explained that the authority has been unable to recruit people to project teams despite extensive attempts utilising various channels for the advertising. The authority has however secured approval from the programme board to appoint a consultant to undertake duties in terms of the first phase so that the authority can make progress.

The authority has got risk registers in place for all projects and officers report to programme boards on a regular basis in relation to those risks and officers are comfortable they can achieve the outcomes that were initially identified albeit subject to the delays referred to in the item.

There was a discussion around the lack of detail in reports around the items discussed, officers gave some context around the shift in the risk profile that the councillors needed to manage. The Chief Executive advised that because lots more information is put into every report, it is consuming even more officer time and officers are

very much struggling in some areas in terms of capacity and encouraged members to ask for more detail to understand risks.

Members asked officers if Pontardawe Arts centre Cinema will have the money spent on it in the coming financial year, members also questioned that given inflation, the projects reprofiling at the same amount could mean that the project may need some additional funding.

Members stated that the budget papers make it clear that the projects and centres will start covering their own costs in full without subsidy. Members felt that particular public centres may find this difficult and noted the importance of the upcoming budget discussion.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2022-2023 as at the End of December 2022

Members were provided with information in relation to the Council's projected revenue budget position as per the report. Officers also added that they were pleased to note that the latest projection is that that the Council's overspend (excluding schools) has reduced to £86k after reserve movements.

Members queried page 123, and the section relating to levies and contributions, aside from the Fire Authority, the report listed other levies and contributions. Members wanted an example what those are those bodies were.

Officers explained that there is a £46,000 for the Swansea Port Health Authority Levy, £1000 Levy for the Margam Joint Crematorium Committee £117 000 Levy for the Corporate Joint Committee. There is also a contribution towards the Archive Service for £96 000 and a contribution towards the Magistrates Court of ten thousand pound given the £270,000 that is detailed in total.

Members questioned the report section on page 119 relating to the housing advice support tenancy service predicting and overspend of £656,000. With the report saying it is incorporated into policy. Members highlighted that the report does not explain how the overspend will be paid for.

Officers advised that it is a change of Welsh Government policy. Officers have put it in as a pressure under consideration. Officers explained that the authority is looking at the rapid rehousing policy and implementing that as soon as possible as it is hoped that will bring some of that down. Officers also advised that the authority needs to move to more of a prevention element of this in the hope that it will bring the overspending down, advising that officers are working on a different approach to housing over the coming months and are doing a lot of work behind the scenes to try and reduce the overspend. He informed members that they will be updated in more detail in the next couple of months.

Members were sympathetic to the work of officers and disappointed that the change in legislation has not been funded and noted that it is a matter of lobbying the Welsh Government to seek funding for such matters.

Following Scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

The 2022-2023 Risk Register Monitored and Report

Members received an update on the Council's Strategic Risks as per the report.

Members asked for an update on the risk of a land slip at Panteg, Cyfyng Road. Officers explained that there had been issues in relation to the demolition of phase one of Cyfyng Road. The authority are liaising with the owners of the properties and the solicitors acting on their behalf are currently making last-minute amendments which will not make any significant difference to the outcome.

Officers have the contractor's Health and Safety and Construction Design Management details, which have been considered internally, with the contractors hoping to be on site in the middle of March. Officers advised that two weeks prior to starting on site the authority will be advising the local community that the works are going ahead to demolish phase one and are hoping that after the demolition of phase one we will then have a momentum for phase two.

Members were advised that phase two is more complex as the insurance companies are still failing to pay out the owners of those

properties because they do not think there is a real health and safety issue associated with those properties. Officers are hoping that once phase one is started that it will send a clear message to the insurance companies and phase two can be progressed.

Members asked about the risk of there being insufficient investment in the Council's major infrastructure and wanted to know if the authority have considered the risk of buildings maintenance when putting together the risk register. As well as whether it was possible to have an up-to-date condition record of all its buildings, whether that risk has been considered and assessed and not met the criteria to be put in the register.

Officers explained that the report seems to be missing the mitigations as the authority does have property asset management plans but seems to have fallen off the report. For example, the basis in which the authority selects schools within the Strategic School Improvement program considers the risks around the buildings. Officers reiterated that there are mechanisms in place that have assessed the risks around the authority's property assets, but it appears that the lines relating to building maintenance must have been accidentally left out on this iteration of the report.

It was agreed that there was some missing detail from the report that reflect the arrangements around property asset management and those would be included in the next report next time

It was also agreed that officers would circulate a copy of the Asset Management Plan to members.

5. **Forward Work Programme 2022/23**

Members decided that they wanted the 2022-2023 income generation report added to the forward work programme.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

1 March 2023

Chairperson: Councillor P.Rogers

Councillors: T.Bowen, C.Clement-Williams, C.Galsworthy, J.Henton, J.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.Paddison, C.Phillips, R.Phillips, S.Pursesey, S.H.Reynolds and M.Spooner

Officers In Attendance K.Jones, A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, N.Pearce, H.Jones, C.Griffiths, C.Owen, N.Blackmore, C.Furlow-Harris, A.James, J.Woodman-Ralph and C.John

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors W.F.Griffiths, S.Harris, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, N.Jenkins, S.Jones, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn and D.M.Peters

1. **Chairs Announcements**

The Chair welcomed the Committee.

2. **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

3. **Pre-decision Scrutiny**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following item on the Cabinet agenda:

2023/24 Revenue Budget Proposals

Members received the proposed Council 2023/24 revenue Budget which was inclusive of the investment in services, investments from reserves, budget solutions and proposed council tax levels. The setting of the principals for fees and charges were

also included within the report. This report was brought to members following the Draft Revenue Budget Proposals going out to consultation, as detailed within the report.

It was noted that on page 29 of the report under the heading 'Reason for proposed decision' that there was an error in the following sentence, 'To fulfil the statutory requirement to determine the budget for 2022/23'. It is meant to read 2023/24 and not 2022/23 as detailed in the report.

It was also highlighted that on Page 9 of the report, there was an error in the following sentence 'Finally, the leisure services listed at Appendix have separate subsidy reduction targets applied.' It was noted that the sentence was referring to appendix 6.

Following scrutiny, the recommendations were supported to Cabinet.

4. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

5th April 2023

Report of the Chair of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

To consider the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in Neath Port Talbot

Purpose of the Report:

1. To commend the report of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group on the draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy to Cabinet.

Executive Summary:

2. The report highlights the review points considered by the Task and Finish Group carried out by members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task & Finish Report is attached at Appendix 1.

Background:

3. Welsh language standard 145 (Promotion) states that every Local Authority must produce and publish on their website a 5 year strategy that sets out how they propose to promote the Welsh Language and to facilitate the use of Welsh Language more widely in their area.
4. The Council's first five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was developed by the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group, which was produced and endorsed by Council in 2018.
5. It was agreed at Cabinet on 19 October 2022 to re-establish the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task and Finish Group in order to develop the second Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-2028, which is enclosed at Appendix 2. An evaluation of the initial strategy had been undertaken and the report formed part of the Task and Finish Group's considerations during the development of the revised Strategy. The evaluation report can be found at Appendix 3.

Financial Impacts:

6. It is proposed that the strategic themes in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will be met within existing budgets, with additional external funding sought whenever possible.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

7. A first stage 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 first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

8. It is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), which is attached to the report at Appendix 4, for the purposes of the meeting.
9. The IIA will be revisited in light of responses to the consultation and a revised impact assessment will accompany the final decision report in due course.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

10. Implementation of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy will contribute to enhancing projects supporting the valley communities.

Workforce Impacts:

11. There are no direct implications associated with this report, however, if the recommendations are agreed and taken forward there potentially could be workforce impacts.

Legal Impacts:

12. There are no legal impacts associated with this report however, the Council has a duty to develop and implement a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

Risk Management Impacts:

13. There are no direct risk management impacts associated with the report however, there may be a reputational as well as financial risk to the Council for failure to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

Consultation:

14. The recommendations included in the report are looking for permission to consult on the draft version of the reviewed Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

Recommendations:

15. That the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee commends the findings of the Task and Finish Group (Appendix 1) as well as the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (appendix 2) to Cabinet, subject to any amendments made at today's meeting:

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

16. To ensure that Neath Port Talbot complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No 1) Regulations 2015.

Implementation of Decision:

17. The decisions are proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices:

18. Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Task & Finish Report
19. Appendix 2 - Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
20. Appendix 3 - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2018-2022 - Evaluation Report
21. Appendix 4 - Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Integrated Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers:

22. Not Applicable

Officer Contact:

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Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Democratic Services Officer

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**Report of the:
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
Task and Finish Group**

**Welsh Language Promotion
Strategy**

Date: April 2023



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee undertook a Task and Finish Group, to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for the County Borough, to enable the Council to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No 1) Regulations and to aim for the Welsh Government's target of achieving 1 million Welsh Speakers by 2050.

The Task and Finish Group commenced on the 23rd November 2022 and met twice to complete this task. A summary of the discussions are included within the report.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Welsh Strategy was developed and adopted in 2018. In the meeting held on 19th October 2022 the Members supported the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy to comply with the requirements of Standard 145 (Promotion).

Standard 145 (Promotion) states that every Local Authority must produce, and publish on their website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how they propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in their area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters) - (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 (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 (or of publishing a revised strategy).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Task and Finish Objective	To develop a revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
Membership	<p><u>Elected Members</u></p> <p>Cllr. Phil Rogers (Chair)</p> <p>Cllr. Helen Ceri Clarke Cllr. James Henton Cllr. Rhidian Mizen Cllr. Suzanne Paddison Cllr. Sheila Penry Cllr. Sean Pursey Cllr. Marcia Spooner</p> <p><u>Advisors/Support Officers</u></p> <p>Charlotte Davies Alison Thomas Rhian Headon Pam Chivers Bethan Crosby</p>
The main aims of the Project	To revise the Neath Port Talbot CBC's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations.
Scope of the study	To comply with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards 145 and 146, limiting the scope of the Strategy to the Council's responsibilities.
How it will contribute to achieving Corporate/Community	<p>The Strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help the Council comply with the Welsh Language Standards • help meet its Wellbeing Objectives particularly Objectives 1 and 3

Objectives / Priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be developed in line with the sustainable development principle • help the Council comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. • contribute to the public services board Wellbeing Objectives (which will be informed by the Wellbeing assessment)
Initial list of key officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies to involve	<p>Officers – as stated above</p> <p>Further officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies as required</p>
Key issues to be addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy include? • Realistically, how can the Council influence the increase or maintain the numbers of Welsh speakers? • What actions are required? • What targets are required?
Timescale for completion of the task	<p>Strategy produced by 1 May 2022</p>
Meeting Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23rd November at 2.00pm – Introduction • 5th December at 2.00pm – Evaluation of Previous Strategy • 13th December at 2.00pm – Workshop Session – discuss amendments to current Strategy • 23rd January at 2.00pm – Draft welsh language Promotion Strategy • 1st February at 10.00AM – Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (if required)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the findings of the Task and Finish Group detailed within this report along with the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy be commended to Cabinet for consideration.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The following Members of Cabinet Scrutiny took part in the Task & Finish Group:

- Cllr P. Rogers (Chair)
- Cllr. Helen Ceri Clarke
- Cllr. James Henton
- Cllr. Rhidian Mizen
- Cllr. Suzanne Paddison
- Cllr. Sheila Penry
- Cllr. Sean Pursey
- Cllr. Marcia Spooner

Members were provided with support from the following officers:

Rhian Headon
Pamela Chivers
Charlotte John
Alison Thomas

The Task and Finish Group commenced on the 23rd November 2022 and met twice to consider the review of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy in order to comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations. Members were also invited to contribute to the review through written submissions via email.

The group understood that the Council is required to review the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy every 5 years to continue to consider and set out how Welsh Language will be promoted and how it will be further facilitated throughout the Borough.

Members of the Group discussed how the Welsh Language is promoted within the community and how the strategy can encourage the increase of the number of Welsh speakers across the County Borough.

Member referred to the census data provided which indicated that the previous target of a 1% increase in the number of Welsh speaker had not been met. However, an increase in children engaging with Welsh medium education along with the Annual Population Survey data for persons 3years+ indicates to the contrary.

When discussing the two options for consultation purposes, members determined to amalgamate both options presented. Option one to be inserted on page 7 of the draft and Option two to be inserted at the end with the action plan.

Members were in general agreement that the consultation should allow for general comments, in order to glean as much information and ideas as possible.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh

www.npt.gov.uk

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Introduction

Our first five year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was launched in 2018 and this strategy for 2023-2028 represents the first revision of the Council's strategy to promote and support the Welsh language in Neath Port Talbot.

This revision has taken account of, and builds on, the progress made in the initial strategy, the commitments of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 as well as the work of our partners in promoting the Welsh language locally.

We acknowledge the limitations we have to increase the number of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot but by working with local organisations, our schools and residents of our many communities we are confident that we will meet the commitments laid out in the strategy.

Although this revised Strategy has been shaped by the feedback received from and discussions with, and between, our many communities, partner organisations, elected members and our senior management team, it is not a 'done deal'. We will revisit the strategy to take into account feedback received during the consultation period to ensure its focus and content along with actions initially identified are appropriate to meet our vision and target.

Vision

The Welsh language is visible in our communities and used by an increased number of people in their daily lives.

Target

As a requirement of the promotion standards we must set a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in our area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the area by the end of the 5 year strategy.

Our previous target of an increase of a minimum of 1% appears to not have been met, according to the Census 2021 data. However, an increase in children engaging with Welsh medium education along with the Annual Population Survey data for persons 3years+ indicates to the contrary.

In light of this it is appropriate to continue to use the target of 1% as an interim measure until further analysis of all relevant data can be undertaken.

Strategic Themes

Our approach set out in this document is structured to reflect the strategic themes outlined in the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy. As these themes reflect our own belief in how the Welsh language can be promoted/facilitated locally we will work toward realising of the themes of

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
- Increasing the use of Welsh
- Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

These themes while not explicitly reflecting the wellbeing objectives in our Corporate Plan 2023-2028 they do permeate/complement each one to as indicated below:

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023 - 2028

Strategic Theme 1

Increasing the number of Welsh speakers

Strategic Theme 2

Increasing the use of Welsh

Strategic Theme 3

Creating favourable conditions - infrastructure and context

Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028

Wellbeing Objective 1

All children get the best start in life.

Wellbeing Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable.

Wellbeing Objective 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations.

Wellbeing Objective 4

Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs.



Welsh is more than just the language; it is part of our being, our heritage and culture. It is woven into the fabric of our lives - even if not instantly recognisable; our place names, forenames, colloquialisms, all are rooted in the Welsh language. Our Culture and Heritage Strategy, currently being developed, will further address these links. Actions identified as part of this promotion strategy will help our aim of increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers and the use of the language whilst also complementing the links between language, culture and heritage.

In order to increase the number of Welsh speakers over the life of the strategy we, both individually and with our partners, will prioritise key areas for action:

Strategic Theme 1: Increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers
Vision: More people speak Welsh
Key areas of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032 • Language transmission in the home • Support people learning/speaking Welsh
Potential actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote benefits of bilingualism/language awareness to young families and all new comers into NPT • Provide homework support to pupils of non-Welsh speaking families attending Welsh medium schools • Explore reasons for limited take up/access to Welsh language courses/education amongst specific communities • Provide language awareness and training courses for teaching and non-teaching staff

Strategic Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh
Vision: Welsh is an integral part of people’s everyday life
Key areas of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote the use of Welsh in social settings • Expand the use of Welsh in the workplace
Potential actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the instances of using Welsh within the Council • Develop a programme of Welsh language events and activities across NPT • Increased use of Welsh in a social context • Work in partnership to identify good practice and resources to increase the number of welsh speaking staff in all our organisations

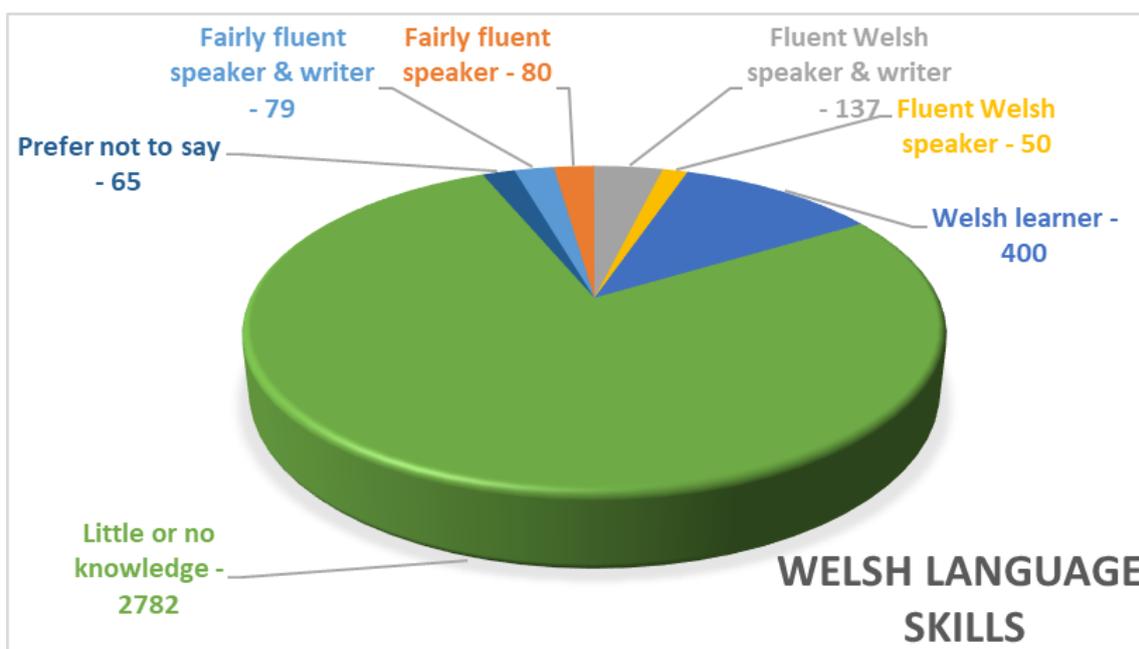
Strategic Theme 3: Creating Favourable Conditions: Infrastructure and Context
Vision: We have an environment in which the language thrives
Key areas of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the visibility of the language across the area • Embed Welsh into all our strategies and plans
Potential actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to increase the visibility of Welsh across leisure, business and cultural locations, activities and events • Promote Welsh in all new developments • Work with services to ensure Welsh is a key element of all new strategies and plans

Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Profile

Council

Over recent years the number of staff who identified as having Welsh language skills has remained relatively low overall. However, there has been a small increase in the number of staff identifying as fluent speakers and writers, 137 in 2021-2022 compared to 126 during 2020-2021, and the number of Welsh learners within the council has increased by 17.

Directorate/Service	Fairly Fluent Speaker & Writer	Fairly Fluent Speaker	Fluent Speaker & Writer	Fluent Speaker	Welsh Learner	Little or no knowledge	Prefer Not To Say	Total
Chief Officers	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	4
Chief Executive's Office								
Digital Services	4	1	2	-	7	90	1	105
Financial Services	3	3	2	-	10	136	1	155
Human & Organisational Development	2	4	5	1	11	77	1	101
Legal & Democratic Services	5	2	6	1	18	64	-	96
Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning								
Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships	4	3	6	2	31	86	6	138
Education Development	5	4	12	4	38	142	4	209
Support Services & Transformation	11	4	25	10	34	469	29	582
Environment								
Engineering and Transport	4	3	6	2	13	107	1	136
Planning & Public Protection	7	9	12	1	60	146	6	241
Property and Regeneration	-	7	3	2	12	112	2	138
South Wales Trunk Road Agency	2	5	9	6	19	155	1	197
Streetcare Services	9	11	13	7	32	384	6	462
Social Service Health and Housing								
Adult Services	12	12	19	9	50	455	4	561
Business Services	-	4	2	4	9	91	2	112
Children and Young People Services	11	8	15	1	55	265	1	356
Total	79	80	137	50	400	2782	65	3593



Neath Port Talbot Locality

According to the 2011 Census, almost 21,000 (15%) of Welsh speakers live in Neath Port Talbot.

Ward	Number of people over 3 years of age	Number of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh	% of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh
Neath Port Talbot	135,281	20,698	15.3
Aberavon	5,232	411	7.9
Aberdulais	2,305	311	13.5
Alltwen	2,251	664	29.5
Baglan	6,627	557	8.4
Blaengwrach	1,935	287	14.8
Briton Ferry (East)	2,827	242	8.6
Briton Ferry (West)	2,896	275	9.5
Bryn and Cwmavon	6,330	1,024	16.2
Bryncoch (North)	2,139	297	13.9
Bryncoch (South)	5,706	699	12.3
Cadoxton	1,647	211	12.8
Cimla	3,835	350	9.1
Coedffranc (Central)	3,870	425	11
Coedffranc (North)	2,322	265	11.4
Coedffranc (West)	2,563	316	12.3

Ward	Number of people over 3 years of age	Number of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh	% of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh
Crynant	1,851	465	25.1
Cwmllynfell	1,137	669	58.8
Cymmer	2,714	186	6.9
Dyffryn	3,078	350	11.4
Glyncorrwg	1,054	65	6.2
Glynneath	3,320	689	20.8
Godre'r Graig	1,571	473	30.1
Gwaun-cae-gurwen	2,823	1,576	55.8
Gwynfi	1,314	92	7
Lower Brynamman	1,277	776	60.8
Margam	2,908	295	10.1
Neath (East)	6,137	497	8.1
Neath (North)	3,838	379	9.9
Neath (South)	4,789	440	9.2
Onllwyn	1,161	222	19.1
Pelenna	1,113	178	16
Pontardawe	5,232	1,624	31
Port Talbot	5,457	518	9.5
Resolven	3,044	341	11.2
Rhos	2,382	588	24.7
Sandfields (East)	6,692	504	7.5
Sandfields (West)	6,495	524	8.1
Seven Sisters	2,049	469	22.9
Taibach	4,634	354	7.6
Tonna	2,445	292	11.9
Trebanos	1,367	459	33.6
Ystalyfera	2,911	1,339	46

Source: 2011 Census

The vast majority of Welsh speakers were in the upper Swansea Valley and Amman Valley, with some communities such as Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman among the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales

However, these areas along with Crynant, have seen the greatest decline in the percentage and numbers of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011 (table below).

Community	Number of Welsh speakers (2001)	Number of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change	% of Welsh speakers (2001)	% of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change
Cwmllynfell	741	669	-72	68.2	58.2	-9.4
Lower Brynamman	861	776	-85	68.1	60.8	-7.3
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	1,860	1,5726	-288	67.9	55.8	-12.1
Ystalyfera	1,614	1,339	-275	54.6	46	-8.6
Trebanos	580	459	-121	43.4	33.6	-8.8
Godre'r Graig	580	473	-107	41.5	30.1	-11.4
Pontardawe	1,826	1,624	-202	37.4	31	-6.4
Alltwen	800	664	-136	35.9	29.5	-6.4
Rhos	692	588	-104	28.6	24.7	-3.9
Crynant	699	465	-234	46.53	25.1	-21.43

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

Factors that contribute historically to linguistic erosion include:

- Lack of language transmission at home
- Out-migration / Immigration
- Negative perception of the inherent value of the language
- Lack of awareness of the advantages of bilingualism
- Lack of confidence in speaking Welsh
- The spread of English into traditional Welsh language areas
- Mixed language marriages
- The power of Anglo-American influence on the interests of children and young people
- More deaths than births among Welsh-speaking families

Census 2021 data is currently only available on an authority wide basis and disappointingly indicates a decrease in the numbers of Welsh speakers locally, a picture reflected across most of Wales.

There has been a significant decrease in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers between the 2011 and 2021 Census; 20,698 (15.3%) of the local population were able to speak Welsh in the 2011 Census while only 18,662 (13.5%) indicated having this language skill in 2021:

	Number who can speak Welsh			Percentage who can speak Welsh		
	2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
NPT	23,404	20,698	18,662	18	15.3	13.5
Wales	582,368	562,016	538,296	20.8	19.0	17.3

The decline in numbers across Wales has been attributed primarily to the decrease in percentage of children and young people (the group most likely to report ability) reported as being able to speak Welsh. The Census 2021 was held during the pandemic and followed periods of lockdown which necessitated remote learning for children and many people working from home. It is not known how the pandemic impacted people's reported Welsh language ability, or their perception of the Welsh language ability of others, such as their children.

In addition, mortality rates, immigration/migration and the subjective nature of language skills all are likely to contribute to the decrease in the number of people identifying as able to speak Welsh.

With Census 2021 data still being released the Plan will be reviewed in light of the additional data and insight to ensure it addresses the ongoing position.

Contrary to Census data the Annual Population Survey has historically and continues to indicate figures far above the Census data:

Neath Port Talbot						
	2011	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Population	134,400	136,100	137,800	136,400	135,400	137,900
Can speak Welsh	27,200	30,500	34,600	27,900	31,100	31,400
% who can speak Welsh	20.7%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23%	22.8%

While the Census 2021 data indicates the decrease in the percentage of children and young people reporting the ability of speak Welsh, data from our pupil level annual school census (PLASC), more consistent with the annual population survey data, indicates an increase in the numbers enrolled in Welsh medium education.

PLASC - Years N1-11			
	2011	2021	2023 (projected)
No. in Welsh medium schools	2,993	3,321	3,329
No. in NPT schools	20,399	21,149	20,535
% in Welsh medium schools	14.7%	15.7%	16.2%

Our Welsh medium schools are:

Primary

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Blaendulais
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmnedd
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmllynfell
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Trebannws
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn

Middle (ages 3-18)

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera - Bro Dur

More detailed information about Welsh medium education, including an aim to create a further three Welsh medium primary schools, can be found in our [WESP 2022-2032](#).

Policy Context

Welsh Language Measure 2011

The Measure:

- gave the Welsh Language official status in Wales - meaning that Welsh should be treated no less favourably than the English language;
- established the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner who has responsibility for promoting the Welsh language and improving the opportunities people have to use it;
- created a procedure for introducing duties in the form of language standards that explain how organisations are expected to use the Welsh language and create rights for Welsh speakers;
- made provision regarding promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increasing its use in everyday life;
- made provision regarding investigating an interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language.

Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015

Under the Regulations Welsh language standards have been imposed on the Council which aim to promote and facilitate the Welsh language, and ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.

The Standards, as applied to the Council, and contained in the compliance notice, comprises service delivery, policy making, operational, promotion and record keeping standards. As a consequence of the promotion standards the Council has developed its Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

Cymraeg 2050 Strategy

Published originally in 2017 and more recently updated the strategy illustrates the Welsh Government's vision to see "the Welsh language thrive" by achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Three key strategic themes are identified to realise this ambition:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
- Increasing the use of Welsh
- Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

More than just Words

The Welsh Government's strategic framework to strengthen Welsh language provision in health and social care aims to support Welsh-speakers to receive services in their first language.

Its 5 year plan 2022-2027 is based on and reflects the strategic themes of Cymraeg 2050:

- Culture and Leadership
- Welsh language planning and policies including data
- Supporting and developing the Welsh Language skills of the current and future workforce
- Sharing best practice and an enabling approach

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This Act is a means of helping the public bodies that are listed in the Act to think in the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, to try to prevent problems and follow a consistent approach in order to improve the well-being of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

One of the seven Wellbeing goals contained in the Act is a 'Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language - a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.'

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Prepared under Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 this latest iteration, Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (WESP), has been developed in the firm belief that education is the vehicle that will produce Welsh speakers of the future.

We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh and so Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. The implementation of the WESP will enable all learners, families and carers to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.

Our WESP is the cornerstone for this vision and its outcomes detail how we plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in our wider communities and how we plan for future growth:

- More nursery children/3 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More reception class children/ 5 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
- More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
- More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
- An increase in Welsh-medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs (in accordance with duties determined by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018)
- Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

With the outcomes and ambitious targets of the WESP relating to the complete education journey it is not appropriate to include similar actions in this revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. However, as both the Plan and Strategy relate to the promotion and facilitation of the Welsh language it is now appropriate for their greater alignment and potential complementary actions to be included in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy as necessary.

Working in partnership

Partners in our journey to promote and facilitate the Welsh language come in all guises from well-established organisations to informal groups, from schools to businesses, from families with babes in arms to those who have lived full and long lives. Welsh speakers or not, young or old we all play our part on this journey. This strategy has the potential to help us make great strides but without the contribution of everyone in Neath Port Talbot it will fall short and not realise its full potential.

Our communities are our greatest partners. We are mindful that any success in this, and any other, strategy is dependent on the investment we all put into it. The investment of our time, our actions and support, finance and commitment to making a difference; for those who already use Welsh daily, who are on the first steps in learning Welsh, those who don't speak it but support the language as well as those who find it all a waste of time, we all have a part to play.

There is an array of local organisations that have the future of the language as a key principle of their work. The significant role they played in the previous strategy is consolidated in this revised iteration. While only those bodies governed by the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations (2015) are subject to promotion standards each organisation has a part to play in ensuring the promotion and the continued use of the language is facilitated in all aspects of daily life.

Local organisations, individually and as constituent members of the Iaith Fforwm Abertawe/Castell-nedd, continue to play a key role in the implementation of the strategy. With the recent restructure of the Fforwm there is greater opportunity to work together in a more structured way and in so doing will address some of the issues highlighted in the evaluation.

We remain conscious of the limitations we as council have in influencing the numbers of Welsh language speakers in the area. Consequently in developing actions we have been mindful of three discrete areas within our responsibility:

- Direct - plans, strategies and internal processes over which the council has sole control.
- Indirect - processes that the council can affect with interventions but does not have outright control
- Partnerships - working with organisations and groups to progress new and established areas of work and creating positive attitudes towards the Welsh language.

Monitoring

We will continue to use existing executive reporting structures to monitor the progress of the Strategy.

Progress will be monitored by the Cabinet and scrutinised by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. Clear monitoring arrangements will be developed with the Language Forum to avoid duplication of effort and ensure alignment with our partners' existing reporting arrangements.

In addition regular progress reports to our internal Welsh Language Officer Group, the WESP Forum and to the Council's Equality and Community Cohesion Group.

The action plan will be reviewed annually and actions revised where appropriate.

Measures will be developed to ensure progress is measured appropriately.

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Action Plan

This latest Action Plan builds on progress made during the period of the first strategy, 2018- 2023, while responding to the position facing the Welsh language in Neath Port Talbot today. The actions will help in developing Neath Port Talbot as an area where the language is considered an important and relevant factor in people's everyday lives.

As in our initial strategy the action plan has been developed within current budgetary constraints although opportunities for additional budget/ external funding will be pursued. A number of actions have been included which are already being delivered or currently being developed to promote and facilitate the language locally.

The following draft Action Plan includes 'potential actions' that have already been identified which we believe will help realise our vision. However, these actions are not set in stone and are included here as the beginning of what we hope will be a meaningful conversation; on the vision and strategy and as to what realistic and achievable actions should be included to help ensure a future where the Welsh language is visible and used by more people in their daily lives.

Strategic Theme 1: Increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers

Vision: More people speak Welsh

Key areas of work

- Support the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032
- Language transmission in the home
- Support people learning/speaking Welsh

Potential Actions

- Promote the 'Welsh Homework Help' Facebook group to all pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in years 5 and 6 from who attend Welsh medium schools.
- Promote the 'Welsh Homework Help' Facebook group to all pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in years 7 and 8 who attend Welsh medium schools.
- Update and promote the 'Benefits of Bilingualism' booklet.
- Promote Welsh language/Welsh-medium education among non-Welsh speaking families to increase/support language awareness
- Establish and promote Welsh language courses for parents who send their children to Welsh-medium primary schools.
- Develop appropriate courses and support for teaching and non-teaching staff learning Welsh
- Explore potential barriers to and increase the take up of Welsh medium education by children from BME communities and other underrepresented groups.
- Explore potential barriers to and increase the take up of adult Welsh language courses amongst BME communities and other underrepresented groups

Strategic Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh

Vision: Welsh is an integral part of people's everyday life

Key areas of work

- Support and promote the use of Welsh in social settings
- Expand the use of Welsh in the workplace

Potential Actions

- Provide opportunities for our staff to access appropriate levels of Welsh language learners/ improvement courses
- Expand the Welsh language leisure programme across Neath Port Talbot.
- Promote the leisure programme to staff and the public through targeted and more general publicity.
- Explore opportunities to increase the visibility of the Welsh language at all leisure facilities
- Promote and embed the Council's Internal use of Welsh Policy
- Explore how Welsh can be used more in a social context
- Work with partners to encourage greater use of the language in all youth clubs
- Welsh language awareness training will be promoted to all staff
- Work with partners to identify opportunities to promote the Welsh language in a variety of social settings

Strategic Theme 3: Creating Favourable Conditions: Infrastructure and Context

Vision: We have an environment in which the language thrives

Key areas of work

- Increase the visibility of the language across the area
- Embed Welsh into all our strategies and plans

Potential Actions

- Work with the BME Community Association to explore ways in which to increase awareness of the Welsh language and culture within communities
- Develop and implement a new Culture and Heritage Strategy that promotes awareness, use and visibility of the Welsh language within Neath Port Talbot
- Develop and implement our internal language skills policy across our service areas.
- Ensure the Welsh language is central to the design and application of new technologies.
- Work with the business community to explore opportunities to increase the visibility of Welsh.
- Ensure Welsh language, heritage and culture is a key component of the Destination Management Plan currently being developed.
- Ensure Welsh is taken into account during the development of the commemoration of people and events in the public realm policy.
- Include the Welsh language as a key element in all future policies and strategies

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Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Review 2022

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Introduction

Neath Port Talbot CBC, along with many other public bodies, was required by the Welsh language standards to produce its first five-year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan in 2016. However, as the Council challenged the application of a number of standards including standards 145 and 146, the Strategy was not produced until October 2018, following the conclusion of the challenge.

Since the publication of the Strategy three progress reports have been published all of which can be found on the Council's website. The progress report for 2021-2022 is due to be published before the end of 2022.

Within the lifetime of the Strategy the Council is required to assess to what extent it has 'followed that Strategy and [has] reached the target set it' (standard 146). This assessment, taking place during the final year of the strategy, will help inform a review of the Strategy which is to take place during winter/spring 2022-2023 ready for publication in April 2023.

Policy Context

The Strategy recognises the strategic national and local context in which it has been developed; the legislative foundation of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, More than Just Words as well as the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The Strategy is further anchored by the promotion and facilitation work undertaken over many years and on which its commitments and principles have been based.

The Strategy has been developed primarily to meet the requirements of the Welsh language standards as applied to the Council and contained in the compliance notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner finalised in April 2018.

Aims of the Strategy

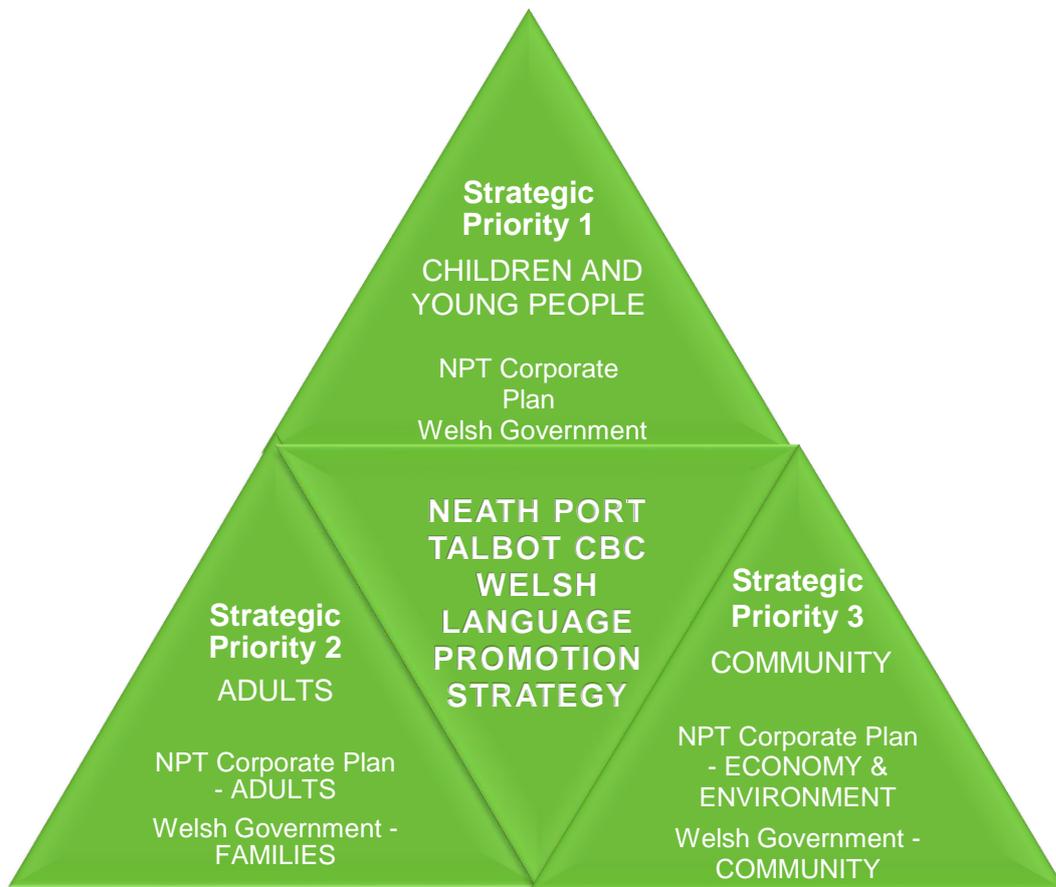
A cross party member Scrutiny Task and Finish Group developed the Strategy, supported by officers of the Council and the local Menter. The Group identified drivers for the development of a strategy; legislative requirements, the contribution to Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 as well as a more instinctive approach to the sensibilities for the language, for example, 'Because it's right to have one...'

The aims of the Strategy reflected these considerations:

- Put steps in place, in the short term, to slow down the percentage decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the usage of the Welsh language in all aspects of life

- Raise awareness of the language as a component of Neath Port Talbot’s heritage, culture, tourism and business sectors
- To drive and support Welsh medium education and the creation of new Welsh medium schools in particular, primary schools through an effective Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Strategic priorities to deliver the aims aligned with the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 and with the Council’s Corporate Plan 2018-2022 as shown in the diagram below (taken from the strategy)



The aims and priorities reflect and complement the strategic and local context of the language in Neath Port Talbot as well as recognising the Council can only play a part in improving the numbers/percentage of Welsh speakers in the area.

There is, however, a lack of clarity as to the vision for Neath Port Talbot although the aims and strategic priorities for the Strategy are clear; even though ‘tucked’ away towards the end of the Strategy along with the vision.

Recommendation -

- Consider the order of the sections in the revised strategy. Be clear as to the vision for the Welsh language in NPT, its promotion and facilitation. Ensure the aims and priorities of the Strategy are foremost in the Strategy and ensure the vision is prominent!

Leadership

The Strategy was developed by elected members, with support of officers of the Council and the local Menter, with its implementation secured through service areas within the Council and in partnership with the Language Forum.

The Strategy states that:

Although overall responsibility for the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy lies with the Council, in accordance with Standard 145 of the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015, each partner organisation shares responsibility by virtue of the commitments made in the action plan.

While individual service areas are identified as responsible for progressing actions in section one of the action plan there doesn't appear to be a clearly defined 'lead' for its overall implementation. In addition some actions identify more than one service area as the 'lead' which adds at best to the ambiguity or at worst stymies any potential progress.

Recommendations

- To address potential confusion over roles and responsibilities for the implementation of actions in the next iteration of the Strategy it is recommended that these roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined.
- To help ensure the successful implementation of future strategies, partners and service areas need to be fully engaged with the process, from development through to implementation, as well as in ongoing assessment.
- Clarity of ownership / leadership to be more clearly defined where partnerships arrangements are in place.

Partnerships

Working in partnership across the sectors and with a range of organisations has been a key component of the Council's activities over many years; the development and implementation of the Strategy being no exception.

Realising the aims of the Strategy is not in the gift of a single organisation and so contributions made by partner organisations to meet the aims of the Strategy are key. The Strategy states:

'The Council has been conscious of its limitations in influencing the maintenance or increase in the number of Welsh language speakers in the area.'

'Members of the Language Forum have shown their support of the Strategy by agreeing to deliver a range of actions, supported by the Council wherever possible, to help deliver the aims of the Strategy.'

'In implementing the Strategy, the Council, Strategic Forum and individual partners will work together to meet its aims, implement change and work towards the common goal.'

The action plan distinguishes between actions that are primarily the responsibility of the Council (section one of the action plan) as opposed to those actions which fall under the purview of the Language Forum (section two) that comprise of organisations with a remit for Welsh language support and provision.

The Language Forum and its individual members are listed as contributors to 39 of the actions in section one of the action plan as well as being responsible for all 20 actions in section two.

Progress in section two of the action plan is noticeably more limited; in a couple of annual reports there appears to be limited information although contributions from the partner organisations are evident within section 1.

Recommendations

- Continue to build on the progress made by partnership working and continue to work in partnership to deliver the next iteration of the Strategy.
- Although partners were identified to help progress many of the actions there isn't always a clear lead or focus on how the partners would work together. This may have inhibited progress. Clearer lines of responsibility and some detail on how partners will work together to progress actions could be considered.
- The implementation and progress of the Strategy would benefit from the Council being represented on the Forum. This would not only show commitment and leadership in relation to the Strategy but help reinforce the wider partnership approach to promoting the language going forward.

Governance

Progress on the actions in the Strategy is reported annually to Cabinet Board and is scrutinised by the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. There is an additional element of scrutiny by the internal Welsh Language Officer Group (WLOG) and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group, whose members include representatives from local equality/community groups.

Monitoring arrangements, as identified in the Strategy, fall to Members of relevant Scrutiny Committees for actions in section one and to the chair of the Language Forum for actions in section two with progress to be reported annually to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

However, the reality is somewhat different; the assessment has identified that monitoring of progress has been confined to an annual report to Cabinet and scrutinised by Cabinet Scrutiny Committee (as is the case with other strategic plans).

Information on progress from partners in the Language Forum in relation to section two of the action plan has been limited over the period - the pandemic being a significant factor in this. However, information as to the contribution of partners to actions in section one is more evident; potentially due to services driving monitoring arrangements.

Although arrangements are not as originally envisaged there is a degree of monitoring and reporting of progress in line with other corporate strategies and plans. However, there are significant gaps in monitoring such the lack of quantitative/qualitative measures to indicate direction of travel. With such arrangements any concerns or good practice could be identified/addressed in a more timely manner.

Recommendation

- Consideration to be given to more effective arrangements to ensure responsibilities and accountability is clear both internally and amongst partner organisations.
- Consider the role of WLOG and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group in scrutinising progress, for example receiving quarterly reports on progress.
- So that the implementation of the Strategy can be effectively monitored while at the same time not being too onerous on partner organisations/Language Forum it is recommended that current practices for partner organisations are accommodated as far as possible. This will help streamline and encourage monitoring of progress. It is suggested that progress against any future actions is reported regularly for example via the chair of the Forum to ensure actions are progressing and to help enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- To help ensure progress is monitored throughout the year performance management arrangements to be put in place to enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.

Costs and resources

The Strategy was developed against a backdrop of austerity and actions were developed in light of resources available at the time. The action plan includes actions that had already been identified or had little or no cost attached to them as well as more aspirational actions to be progressed should circumstances allow.

At the outset staffing capacity was considered sufficient to progress the commitments of the strategy. However, the pandemic and the resulting changes to staffing arrangements, working practices as well as restrictions to service provision, has had a limiting effect over the last two years of the strategy.

The need to refocus and reprioritise services, along with their methods of delivery, and resources (budget and staff) has been a major factor in the implementation of the Strategy during the height of the pandemic. Consequently, progress was paused or limited in some areas, for example, encouraging businesses to promote Welsh as well as education related actions, albeit work to progress actions have since recommenced.

Recommendations

- Consideration to be given to identify external funding for projects/specific events or activities to enable promotion of the language more widely.

- In light of the new WESP and Corporate Plan, consideration to be given to sharing resources across service areas to achieve a better take up/promotion/publicity of the language.

Progress assessment

Each annual report provides an insight into not only the progress made in meeting the aims of the Strategy but also records the journey of a strategy, and all involved, from taking a tentative dip and trying to stay afloat to striking out for distant shores.

2018-2019

The rate of progress has been mixed in respect of the short term actions due to a number of reasons including, potentially over ambitious target dates, increased officer workloads, sickness/maternity leave, the underestimation of the level of complexity in the implementation of some actions.

In some areas, including early years' provision, significant progress has been made in promoting the Welsh language to parents and childcare providers. This activity is borne out with the rise in the number of children accessing Welsh Flying Start child care during 2018-2019, 135 compared to 104 in 2017-2018.

2020-2022

Progress during this period was hit significantly by the outbreak of the pandemic and its resulting ongoing impacts. The unprecedented situation brought with it challenges and impacts for communities, partner organisations and the Council which had never been experienced before. With the resulting necessary changes in service delivery, working practices as well as a refocusing of priorities, activity on the Strategy was suspended. Maintaining services, in what was a very different environment, took precedence and any progress against actions was limited.

While the closure of leisure facilities for a significant period hampered actions to promote the language in these areas, there was some progress in relation to Welsh medium education for example provision of new/additional childcare spaces and additional Foundation Phase classrooms at five Welsh-medium schools. This has been due to the increase in the numbers of children accessing Welsh language flying start childcare places and reception age Welsh language education.

The Strategy anticipates that by 2023 'the Council will have contributed to a minimum increase of 1% in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough within the current financial plan, and current levels of funding and resources'. It is difficult to confidently assess progress made against this figure as the data currently available is extrapolated from information gathered as part of the annual population survey. This has been made more difficult with a recent revision of the 2020-and 2021 data. 'This planned reweight (using updated Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) data) as well as to correct an error affecting grossing factors for some age groups for the annual periods between April 2019 to March 2020 and July 2020 to June 2021' (source Stats Wales).

	31 March 2018	31 March 2019	31 March 2020	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
% of persons (aged 3 and over) who say they can speak Welsh	22.4%	25.3%	20.5%*	23%*	22.8%
% of persons (aged 3 and over) who say they speak Welsh daily	9.3%	12.5%	10%*	10.6%*	10.1%
% of adults who say they speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words (FG36)	11%	10%	10%	12%	N/A
% of adults who say they speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words (FG37)	18%	16%	-	19%	N/A

* Revised data

Based on the above data the Council would have made significant progress in increasing the number of people who can speak Welsh (an increase of 2.3%, based on the revised 2020 figure) however this is not seem to be translated into the frequency of use.

However, a clearer and more reliable indicator will be the Census 2021 which is due for release in December 2022.

Conclusions

Overall the development and implementation of the Strategy has been positive.

The strategic priorities identified correspond with the national vision and take into the local policy and language context with the resulting target mindful of current provision and financial constraints.

While there is an element of strong leadership this is tempered with ambiguity in certain areas of the action plan and in aspects of governance.

Summary of Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been identified to address some of the issues highlighted as well as strengthening areas of good practice.

- Consider the order of the sections in the revised strategy. Be clear as to the vision for the Welsh language in NPT, its promotion and facilitation. Ensure the aims and priorities of the Strategy are foremost in the Strategy and ensure the vision is prominent!
- To address potential confusion over roles and responsibilities for the implementation of actions in the next iteration of the Strategy it is recommended that these roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined.

- To help ensure the implementation of future strategies, partners and service areas need to be fully engaged with the process, from development through to implementation, as well as in ongoing assessment.
- Clarity of ownership/leadership to be defined where partnership arrangements are in place.
- Continue to build on the progress made by partnership working and continue to work in partnership to deliver the next iteration of the Strategy.
- Although partners were identified to help progress many of the actions there isn't always a clear lead or focus on how the partners would work together. This may have inhibited progress. Clearer lines of responsibility and some detail on how partners will work together to progress actions could be considered.
- The implementation and progress of the Strategy would benefit from the Council being represented on the Language Forum. This would not only show commitment and leadership in relation to the Strategy but help reinforce the wider partnership approach to the promoting the language going forward
- Consideration to be given to more effective arrangements to ensure responsibilities and accountability is clear both internally and amongst partner organisations.
- WLOG and the Equality and Community Cohesion Group to play a greater role in scrutinising progress, for example receiving quarterly reports on progress.
- So that the implementation of the Strategy can be effectively monitored while at the same time not being too onerous on partner organisations/Language Forum it is recommended that current practices for partner organisations are accommodated as far as possible. This will help streamline and encourage monitoring of progress. It is suggested that progress against any future actions is reported regularly via the chair of the Forum to ensure actions are progressing and to help enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- To help ensure progress is monitored throughout the year performance management arrangements to be put in place to enable any issues that may arise to be addressed in a timely manner.
- Consideration to be given to identify external funding for projects/specific events or activities to enable promotion of the language more widely.
- In light of the new Welsh Education Strategic Plan and corporate plan consideration to be given to sharing resources across service areas to achieve a better take up/promotion/publicity of the language.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment considers the duties and requirements of the following legislation in order to inform and ensure effective decision making and compliance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Version Control

Version	Author	Job title	Date
e.g. Version 1	Rhian Headon	Corporate Policy Officer	

1. Details of the initiative

	Title of the Initiative: Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (WLPS)
1a	Service Area: Corporate
1b	Directorate:
1c	Summary of the initiative: This second iteration of the WLPS has been developed by a Cabinet Scrutiny Task and Finish Group with advice and support from Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot. The strategy has taken into account a number of factors: a review of the current strategy (2018-2023); the advice and support of Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot; consideration of content of current and proposed strategies and plans. The Strategy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• facilitate an increase in the number of people who speak Welsh in Neath Port Talbot• establish the Welsh language as an integral part of people's everyday life in Neath Port Talbot

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate an environment in which the Welsh language thrives <p>The WLPS is developed under the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015.</p>								
1d	Is this a 'strategic decision'? Yes								
1e	<p>Who will be directly affected by this initiative?</p> <table> <tr> <td>Residents of Neath Port Talbot</td> <td>Employees of the Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools – pupils and staff</td> <td>Visitors to Neath Port Talbot</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third sector organisations</td> <td>Elected Members</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Businesses</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Residents of Neath Port Talbot	Employees of the Council	Schools – pupils and staff	Visitors to Neath Port Talbot	Third sector organisations	Elected Members	Businesses	
Residents of Neath Port Talbot	Employees of the Council								
Schools – pupils and staff	Visitors to Neath Port Talbot								
Third sector organisations	Elected Members								
Businesses									
1f	<p>When and how were people consulted?</p> <p>Feedback from a range of consultation exercises undertaken during the last two years has helped inform the strategy; including the Let's Talk engagement, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Public Service Board's Wellbeing Assessment.</p> <p>The consultation exercises consisted of online questionnaires, hard copies of questionnaires distributed to libraries etc., as well as face to face engagement with local groups and organisations.</p> <p>Further consultation on the draft strategy is to be undertaken during April/May 2023</p>								
1g	<p>What were the outcomes of the consultation?</p> <p>Feedback from previous consultation exercises helped inform the strategy and identified the language as something that was close to people's hearts, that it was inextricably linked to the culture and heritage of NPT and the nation, but although something to be proud of, was also a cause of irritation/annoyance as to its use in correspondence, signage and to a degree in education.</p> <p>Feedback post April/May 2023 - TBC</p>								

2. Evidence

What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?

Census 2011

Language profile of the area - according to the 2011 Census, around 15.3% of the county borough's population speak Welsh 20,698 individuals. Communities such as Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman are amongst the highest percentage of Welsh speaking areas in Wales.

There has been a significant drop in the number of people speaking Welsh in these, and other areas in the county borough, between the 2001 and 2011 Census. Trebanos and Crynant have seen the largest percentage comparable change, - 20.86% and -33.47% respectively.

Census 2021

While comprehensive Census 2021 data has yet to be released initial indications show a significant decrease in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot since the Census 2011:

Number who can speak Welsh			Percentage who can speak Welsh		
2001	2011	2021	2001	2011	2021
23,404	20,698	18,662	18	15.3	13.5

Annual Population Survey

Contrary to Census data the Annual Population Survey has historically and continues to indicate figures far above the Census data:

Neath Port Talbot						
	2011	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Population	134,400	136,100	137,800	136,400	135,400	137,900
Can speak	27,200	30,500	34,600	27,900	31,100	31,400

Welsh						
% who can speak Welsh	20.7%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23%	22.8%

Let's Talk consultation responses (2021)

Responses included many comments on Welsh language, culture and heritage including:

- Love for the 'Welshness' of their community.
- The presence of the Welsh language was a very positive attribute that Welsh speakers appreciate,
- General sense of Welsh culture and heritage.
- Welsh language alongside English is beneficial for their children's learning.

Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

While the Census 2021 data indicates the decrease in the percentage of children and young people reporting the ability to speak Welsh, data from our pupil level annual school census (PLASC), more consistent with the annual population survey data, indicates an increase in the numbers enrolled in Welsh medium education.

PLASC - Years N1-11			
	2011	2021	2023 (projected)
No. in Welsh medium schools	2,993	3,321	3,329
No. in NPT schools	20,399	21,149	20,535
% in Welsh medium schools	14.7%	15.7%	16.2%

3. Equalities

a) How does the initiative impact on people who share a **protected characteristic**?

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age	✓			<p>It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact for adults and children and young people with increased opportunities to learn Welsh; opportunities to use Welsh in more social settings and provision of help and support to non-Welsh speaking families whose children are in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>Census 2021 data would suggest that there is a decrease in Welsh speakers particularly among school age children. The strategy aims to help address this in its support of the WESP and by enabling learners and speakers.</p> <p>In supporting the implementation of the WESP 2022-2032 and working with employers, organisations and the community, the strategy will help increase the awareness, knowledge, and Welsh language skills of people of all age groups.</p>
Disability	✓			<p>In supporting the implementation of the WESP and or teaching and non-teaching staff in learning Welsh there is likely to be a positive impact for children and young people in Welsh medium education.</p> <p>However, more generally it is considered there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>
Gender reassignment			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Marriage & civil partnership			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Pregnancy and maternity	✓			While the strategy aims to encourage the use of Welsh generally, raising awareness of bilingualism amongst young families is a key element. With increases in numbers attending early years provision there is likely to be an ongoing positive impact for people who share this characteristic.

Race	✓			<p>It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact with the aim to raise awareness of the language as a component of the area's heritage and culture. It is possible that pride in the language and identity will be regenerated even if not a Welsh speaker.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that promoting the Welsh language, culture and heritage could generate negative impacts, particularly from those who do not have a Welsh background, are non- Welsh speakers and/or those who perceive the strategy and action plan to be attracting limited resources for the benefit of a 'minority'.</p> <p>Working with our BME communities to better understand real or perceived barriers to learning Welsh will have a positive impact. There is a potential positive impact with increased understanding/take up of Welsh language training/education amongst members from our more diverse communities.</p>
Religion or belief			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Sex			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic
Sexual orientation			✓	It is considered that there will be a neutral impact on people with this protected characteristic

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?				
Consultation to be undertaken which will help confirm/identify alternative impacts.				

b) How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty?**

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
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To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	✓			The Strategy is clear in its aims to promote the Welsh language and is likely to help eliminate historic 'discrimination' due to Welsh language services not being fully recognised as equal to English services, etc.
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	✓			The Strategy is clear in its aims to promote the Welsh language and in so doing it is anticipated that the strategy will increase opportunities for Welsh speakers.
To foster good relations between different groups	✓			The Strategy is designed to benefit everyone, non-Welsh speakers, learners or fluent Welsh speakers. However, it is possible that the strategy could result in some resentment from non-Welsh speakers/supporters, although this should be minimal.

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?
<p>Publicity of the strategy will be undertaken to raise its profile.</p> <p>Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. will be produced to promote activities etc., when appropriate, throughout the life of the strategy.</p>

4. Socio Economic Duty

Impact	Details of the impact/advantage/disadvantage
Positive/Advantage	<p>There is potential for the strategy to help address socio-economic disadvantage within Neath Port Talbot. Greater opportunities and support to learn and use Welsh will help provide a greater awareness of the language itself while increasing individuals' skill levels. With complementary actions to support the outcomes in the WESP, children and young people and their families' improvement in language skills, increased attainment and involvement in the education journey will be maximised. This will help ensure increased opportunities in further education and accessing employment.</p> <p>Greater opportunities to improve/use language skills with activities and events accessible for</p>

	<p>all skill levels. Participation by all communities in celebrating/learning/using the language will potentially help improve wellbeing and so impact positively on health in the short and in the longer term.</p> <p>Cultural and heritage activities/events will help increase participation by those members of our communities who struggle to do so currently, due to lack of confidence, ability, opportunity or financial constraints.</p>
Negative/Disadvantage	N/A
Neutral	N/A

What action will be taken to reduce inequality of outcome
This will be revisited following the consultation period.

5. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	✓			<p>The strategy aims to promote the Welsh language, culture and heritage and as a result it is anticipated that this would have a positive impact, especially in instilling (greater) pride in the area and Wales as a whole. The various actions would help encourage participation and so bring about a new sense of belonging and community spirit.</p> <p>However, there is a danger that the proposal could trigger disharmony and resentment amongst those non Welsh speakers who do not support the aims of the</p>

				strategy, etc.
Social Exclusion			✓	Little impact on either of these is anticipated however the implementation of the strategy and associated actions could lead to more involvement of those socially excluded due to lack of Welsh language activities/opportunities.
Poverty				

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

Ensure that the strategy and actions are as inclusive as possible. Use publicity judiciously to promote Welsh and dispel any potential negative perceptions.

6. Welsh

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?
What effect does the initiative have on: - people's opportunities to use the Welsh language	✓			The aims of the strategy and the action plan will help provide more opportunities to use Welsh, more activities and events held in Welsh thereby increasing the number of participants. The strategy will also help ensure that Welsh is a key element in policies/strategies as well as being more visible across the whole of the area. Implementation of the strategy will help all Welsh speakers within Neath Port Talbot regardless of their skills level, their location or community.
- treating the Welsh and English languages equally	✓			By implementing the strategy it is likely that the profile of Welsh language will be raised and become more visible throughout the area. The fulfilment of the strategy will help raise the profile of the language, secure its place and promote its equal status within Neath Port Talbot. Treating both languages equally is a legislative

				requirement and the strategy and associated actions aim to help establish this.
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?
<p>Publicity of the strategy and its action plan will be undertaken. Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. will be produced to promote activities/events etc. as and when appropriate. Further consideration will be given to this during and following the consultation period.</p>

7. Biodiversity

How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Biodiversity Duty**?

Biodiversity Duty	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity			✓	There is no impact on biodiversity as a result of the strategy and potential actions at this time.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.			✓	However, as time goes on there may be impacts, Welsh medium school extensions/new builds, etc., and these will be considered as part of the individual project.

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?
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No action at this time although this will be kept under review

8. Well-being of Future Generations

How have the five ways of working been applied in the development of the initiative?

Ways of Working	Details
i. Long term – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	The strategy is the Council’s response to the Welsh Government’s commitment to increase the number of Welsh speakers by 2050. This is a long term aim and the strategy is a step on the road to achieve this.
ii. Prevention – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	<p>The strategy and its actions have been developed with the aim to ultimately facilitate an increase in the number of Welsh speakers; increase the use of Welsh and ensure the language has greater visibility in the area.</p> <p>By supporting parents, particularly non-Welsh speakers, throughout the educational journey (preschool to college), providing increased opportunities to learn and use Welsh as well as increasing understanding and knowledge of the culture and heritage, the strategy and actions aim to ‘change’ attitudes as well as increase the number of Welsh speakers.</p>
iii. Collaboration – working with other services internal or external	<p>It is not in the Council’s gift to singlehandedly influence the increase in the number of Welsh speakers nor be in a position to solely promote the language and the strategy has been developed accordingly.</p> <p>A number of council services as well as partners in the voluntary sector will help deliver the aims of the strategy. Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot has supported the development of the strategy with the Language Forum also lending its support.</p>
iv. Involvement – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the	The strategy and action plan were developed by a cross party elected Member Task and Finish Group with advice and support from officers of the Council and Menter Iaith CnPT. Members were able to use their personal and ward knowledge in developing the strategy.

population	
v. Integration – making connections to maximise contribution to:	Links to other Council initiatives and strategies have been identified and applied wherever possible. In addition to those identified below there are particular links to the WESP and the draft Culture and Heritage Strategy.
Council’s well-being objectives	<p>The strategy supports and complements the council’s purpose, vision, values as stated in the Corporate Plan:</p> <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help Neath Port Talbot residents live good lives <p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children get the best start in life • All communities are thriving and sustainable. • Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations. • Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs. <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected • Caring • Collaborative • Confident
Other public bodies objectives	<p>The strategy supports and complements the Public Services Board’s Wellbeing Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have the best start in life • All our communities will be thriving and sustainable • Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations • There are more green, secure and well-paid jobs and skills across the area are improved

9. Monitoring Arrangements

Provide information on the monitoring arrangements to:

Monitor the impact of the initiative on Equalities, Community Cohesion, the Welsh Measure, Biodiversity Duty and the Wellbeing Objectives.

The Welsh Language Officer Group and Equality and Community Cohesion Group will have a key role in monitoring progress.

Progress will be monitored by Cabinet and scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The impact of the strategy and progress against actions will be reported in an annual report presented to Cabinet/ Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

10. Assessment Conclusions

Please provide details of the conclusions reached in relation to each element of the assessment:

	Conclusion
Equalities	
Socio Economic Disadvantage	
Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty	
Welsh	
Biodiversity	
Well-being of Future Generations	

Overall Conclusion

Please indicate the conclusion reached:

- **Continue** - as planned as no problems and all opportunities have been maximised
- **Make adjustments** - as potential problems/missed opportunities/negative impacts have been identified along with mitigating actions
- **Justification** - for continuing with the initiative even though there is a potential for negative impacts or missed opportunities
- **STOP** - redraft the initiative as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified

Please provide details of the overall conclusion reached in relation to the initiative

11. Actions

What actions are required in relation to obtaining further data/information, to reduce or remove negative impacts or improve positive impacts?

Action	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Undertake consultation on the draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team	12 April - 10 May 2023	Consultation responses received
Publicise the Strategy and Action Plan during the	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team/	12 April - 10 May 2023 As and when required following	Communication plan developed and actioned

consultation period and beyond	Communications & Digital Services	adoption of the Strategy and Action Plan	Press release issued and other media activities undertaken
Ensure that the Strategy and Action Plan are as inclusive as possible.	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Relevant Service Areas	Following consideration of responses received during the consultation	Strategy and Action Plan revised in light of responses received during the consultation
Articles/press releases/social media publicity etc. to be produced to promote activities	Relevant services / Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Communications & Digital Services	When appropriate throughout the life of the Strategy	Articles, etc. are published in a timely manner
Measures to be developed to ensure progress is measured appropriately	Corporate Policy, Performance and Engagement Team / Relevant Service Areas	July 2023	Data is available for and reported in annual reports

12. Sign off

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by				
Signed off by				

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Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(All starting 2pm unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Contact Officer
2023		
11 th Jan (Cancelled)		
19 th January		
22 nd Feb		
10 th March	PSB Scrutiny	Vanessa Dale
5 th April	Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – Task and Finish Group Report	Chair of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee
17 th May		

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