



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Welsh Language Commissioner Standards Investigation: Questionnaire

Section 1 – General

1. Full name of the organization:

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

2. Type of organization:

County Borough Council – Local Government

3. Which geographical area is served by the organization?

Neath, Port Talbot, parts of the Swansea Valley and Amman Valley
Neath Port Talbot has a geographic area of 442 km² and is the eleventh largest council in Wales with a population of 139, 880 (the 8th highest population density). The population of the County Borough is projected to increase by 8,900 (6.5%) by mid-2023 (the eleventh highest expected population growth). Estimations indicate a rise in the number of older people by 17% from 2006-2031.

4. Provide a description of the organization's main duties.

Local Government functions

5. What is the location of the organization's headquarters and main regional offices?

Civic Centre Port Talbot - Main office

6. Does the organization have other administration offices?

Yes [] No []

If 'yes', where are the organization's other administration offices located?

Civic Centre Neath
The Quays Baglan Port Talbot

7. Apart from the administration offices previously noted, list all other public buildings within the organization's boundaries and responsibilities which are open to the public or a section of the public e.g. day care home, leisure centre etc

Day centres
Libraries - mobile and buildings
Vocational Skills Centre
Community Centres
Theatres

8. How many employees work for the organization?

4464 – February 2014

9. How many of those employees have Welsh language skills?
(note fluency levels if known)

289 members of staff have indicated they are able to speak Welsh (as reported in The Annual Monitoring Report 2012-2013).

10. Please provide information and/or evidence regarding the institutional arrangements the organization has in place to support and lead the work of planning Welsh language services and to comply with the current Welsh language scheme's requirements.

The administration of the Scheme will be supported by the Welsh Language Officers' Group consisting of representatives from each of the Council's directorates. The minutes of this Group's meetings will go to directorate management teams and to meetings of the Heads of Service Equalities Group as a matter of course.

The Council's Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board will be responsible for reviewing the Scheme and keeping its implementation under regular consideration. Heads of Service will be responsible for reporting on compliance to their relevant Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet Boards on a biannual basis.

It will be the Senior Implementing Officer's responsibility to co-ordinate the corporate implementation of the Scheme and to evaluate the Council's performance in delivering the requirements of the Scheme. The Senior Implementation Officer will also be responsible for reporting progress on these matters to the Council through the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board.

Heads of Service will be responsible for implementing the Scheme within their own directorates and for reporting progress on implementation to their respective Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet Boards on a biannual basis. They will be expected to nominate a Senior Officer to take managerial responsibility within the directorate.

11. Please provide information and/or evidence regarding any facility the organization has to support the use of the Welsh language.

The Welsh Language Translation Unit a shared service with the City and County of Swansea, and provides support in the form of written translation and is also able to provide simultaneous translation services on request.

However, while the unit is willing to provide this support there are instances where capacity issues make this problematic. This is understandable given it is a shared service and that it is primarily an education service thus priority is given to work requested by this service.

Section 2 – Service delivery standards

Activity 1: Correspondence

12. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

13. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for correspondence [1-8]

14. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

The Council's current Welsh Language Scheme covers the majority of the requirements in these standards. Where the standards impose new requirements we are satisfied that they are not unreasonable or disproportionate.

Although not stated in our Scheme it is implicit that letter and emails in Welsh are treated the same as those in English and as such attract the same protocol, thus would be signed.

All our letter headed paper includes the statement that we welcome correspondence in Welsh and English.

However, we are conscious that the lack of additional resources to accompany the standards, capacity issues with translation and the current recruitment freeze that is in being will impact on meeting the Standards.

15. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Activity 2: Telephone calls

16. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

17. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for telephone calls [9-18]

18. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

We are conscious that the lack of additional resources to accompany the standards, capacity issues with translation and the current recruitment freeze that is in being will all have implications in meeting the standards.

There is currently a protocol in place to deal with Welsh incoming calls, whether they are through the switchboard or direct to staff.

19. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Activity 3: Help-lines and call-centres

20. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

21. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for help-lines and call-centres [19-29]

22. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Corporately we are able to comply with these Standards however where individual services have call centres/help lines there would be some difficulty given the current financial climate.

However the protocols we have in place for incoming/outgoing calls in Welsh would go some way to meeting these Standards in those sections of the Council where there may be some difficulty.

Where used automated responses are currently bilingual.

23. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Corporately we are able to comply with these Standards however where individual services have call centres/help lines there would be some difficulty given the current financial climate.

However the protocols we have in place for incoming/outgoing calls in Welsh would go some way to meeting these Standards in those sections of the Council where there may be some difficulty.

Activity 4: Personal meetings

24. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

25. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for personal meetings [26-29]

26. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

We currently accommodate personal meetings in Welsh where the request has been made. Where members of staff are able to speak Welsh and are able to assist/hold the meeting in Welsh then this is carried out.

Standard 27 – may not always be possible to comply immediately due to the availability of staff.

Standards 28 and 29 – level of detail could be problematic.

27. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

We find these standards unclear and can only assume that either 28 or 29 would be applied – which ever is applied two way translations would be prohibitive in time, staffing and cost.

Standard 28 – providing simultaneous translation to all requested personal meetings would be unreasonable and disproportionate – especially two way translation.

Standard 29 - providing consecutive translation to all requested personal meetings would be unreasonable and disproportionate – especially two way translation.

Activity 5: Public meetings

28. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

29. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for public meetings [30-38]

30. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

We hold a wide range of 'public meetings' within the Council – these range from locally held meetings for specific communities/ topics, meetings of the Council, public hearings, inter agency meetings, seminars, etc.

Our Scheme focuses on 'public facing' meetings as internal meetings, which would include the interagency meetings/ seminars etc which were not previously part of our Scheme.

'Invitation' to public meetings:

Where we currently arrange meetings with the public we try to ensure that Welsh speaking officers attend, and we also consider the appropriateness of simultaneous or other translation and the location and subject of the meeting. We are also aware that there are some communities within our boundary where the use of Welsh predominates and we ensure that Welsh speaking staff or translation equipment will be available for public meetings in these locations.

Meetings of the Council – 'the Council's Standing orders require that in all proceedings of the Council the Welsh and English language shall be given the same status and validity, with appropriate advance arrangements being required for simultaneous translation facility requirements.'

We have made arrangements that simultaneous translation is available at timetabled full Council meetings however there are issues with simultaneous translation available at non scheduled meetings of full Council.

Open meetings:

This covers a wide range of meetings – problematic in respect of Council meetings particularly in respect of simultaneous translation.

31. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the

reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

Meetings for Council – although simultaneous translation has been introduced for scheduled Council meetings we have experienced translation capacity issues which is likely to be further exacerbated if the Standards are introduced.

Simultaneous translation – for all meetings would be problematic.

Standard 32 and Standard 33 appear to be an either or scenario. If this is the case then Standard 33 would appear to be the most cost effective solution.

Standard 36 – the cost considerations and practicalities of providing this service when no indication of the requirement needs to be given is a concern.

Standard 38 – is an additional resource issue (also see above)

Activity 6: Publicity and advertising

32. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

33. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for publicity and advertising [41]

34. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

There will be limitations on the social media front – it is not something that we are able to do at present. However while not able to initiate Welsh publicity via social media we are able to do so through other channels.

We are able to comply through the broadcast media and print media but will have limited ability through social media – due to the immediate nature of the service.

35. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

This is 'No' in relation to the limitation of social media as explained above.

In addition, as a result of the current recruitment freeze, we are experiencing constraints in the external recruitment of new employees who have Welsh language skills which they can use in the workplace for such areas of activity.

Activity 7: Public exhibitions

36. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

37. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for public exhibitions [42]

38. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

We ensure that name titles and captions for exhibitions and displays are bilingual and make every effort to ensure the parity for the Welsh and English in other display material.

Costs in providing all exhibition and display material bilingually will be prohibitive.

39. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

The difficulties faced in complying with this Standard relates primarily to the cost element of providing such materials.

Physical display/exhibition material usually requires a highly professional finish and while we would be conscious of meeting our obligation, in today's financial climate we are finding it difficult to provide highly professional material in one language only.

Where possible we will work towards this Standard, however as we use information sourced from external sources, which is not always in Welsh, it is not always possible to fully comply.

Activity 8: Publications

40. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

41. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for publications [43-45]

42. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Where the requirements are already included in our Scheme we are able to comply.

However there would be some issue with 'Cabinet papers' and 'Agendas, minutes and other papers for meetings conferences or seminars open to persons'; delays in translation, cost of translation and cost of reproducing papers would all feature in this.

43. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

However, we cannot for 'Cabinet papers' and 'Agendas minutes and other papers for meetings conferences or seminars open to persons'; delays in translation due to capacity issues, cost of translation and cost of reproducing papers would all feature in this. We have to meet our legal requirements for administering council business.

Activity 9: Forms

44. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

45. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for forms [46-49]

46. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

The standards are similar to those already within our Scheme. As a result we would be able to comply with the standards.

47. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Activity 10: Websites and online services

48. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

49. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for websites and online services [50-52]

50. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

The Standards that refer to the Website are similar to what is included in our Scheme. However the reality of the website is that it is no longer fit for purpose and as such we are currently working on stripping the 'dead pages' and ensuring the pages are accessible in both English and Welsh.

We are able to meet Standard 51 and would be able to work towards meeting Standard 50 over a specified period of time.

51. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

There will be specific barriers in fully meeting the Standards where there are limitations of the technology where English only pages are available due to the software packages.

It may not be possible for suppliers to accommodate Welsh and as such where the standards are applied we would not be able to comply. Where Welsh could be accommodated the cost may be prohibitive and applying the Standards would be disproportionate and unreasonable.

Activity 11: Signage

52. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

53. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for signage [53-57]

54. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Signage is something that we as a Council strive to ensure is bilingual. Through our Scheme we aim for parity for both languages but we recognise that this is not always possible – due to location, size and information to be included.

55. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

Standard 55 – Where the Languages are matched the size of the sign could potentially be disproportionate for the location and would involve an increased cost element. It is not just about the language but also about the accessibility of the signs (also other publications etc for those who have a visual impairment – cost, size and common sense all play a part.

Standard 56 – There will be a cost element in replacing signs which will be prohibitive.

Standard 57 - Translation is given to our Welsh Translation Unit and we are dependant on their translation skills, linguistic accuracy and terminological consistency. Reliance on translators for proofing and accuracy. Linguistic accuracy is something that we would support but there would be a difference in a loose translation of a sign to a formal translation for legal purposes.

Issues with safety aspect for highways signs – an increase in information for road markings will cause safety issues.

Highway signs:

- a concern whether Welsh above English on road signs will create a safety hazard.
- with respect to future replacement of road signs, where not bilingual already the standard could require expenditure on new posts and foundations, in addition to the signs.

Activity 13: Official notices

60. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

61. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for official notices [63-65]

62. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Non statutory notices are published bilingually but where these contain and complex or extensive detail, they are published in English. However, we aim to include bilingual place names and street names where they exist.

'Public/statutory notices' - these are dealt with separately under our Scheme and are produced bilingually where it relates to the County Borough as a whole or to an area where Welsh predominates.

63. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

Legal position with public notices – legal terminology may not be translated accurately by translators – the cost to translate legal notices would be prohibitive particularly in light of the current financial climate. This has major implications for the Council and public alike.

Public notices in newspapers charged excessive amount per column inch - cost would be prohibitive to produce bilingually.

Until the advertising cost is reduced or other ways available to meet legal requirements then these would be produced in English only.

Activity 14: Awarding grants

64. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes] No]

65. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes] No]

Proposed standards for awarding grants [66-69]

66. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

This is not specifically in our Scheme but we do specify that we will encourage others to use the Welsh Language and introduce a bilingual practice by stating this in application documents; by informing them that we have a Welsh Language Scheme and providing on request any information and advice on these matters.

All documents, tenders, contracts, agreements as well as grant and loan conditions will include provision for services to be delivered according to this Scheme. Where services involve contact with the public, agents or contractors will be asked to state how those services will be delivered in Welsh.

67. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes] No]

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Application of these Standards would necessitate a further review of grant activity throughout the Council.

Activity 15: Awarding contracts

68. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

69. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for awarding contracts [70-73]

70. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

All documents, tenders, contracts, agreements as well as grant and loan conditions will include provision for services to be delivered according to this Scheme. Where services involve contact with the public, agents or contractors will be asked to state how those services will be delivered in Welsh.

71. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Legal position with contracts – legal terminology may not be translated accurately by translators – the cost to translate and publish legal notices would be prohibitive particularly in light of current financial climate. This would have major implications for Council and contractor alike.

Activity 16: Raising awareness of Welsh language services that are available

72. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

73. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for raising awareness of Welsh language services that are available [74-77]

74. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Although not specifically in our Scheme there is provision for promoting the Welsh language service as part of our day to day work especially with bilingual documentation, greetings, switchboard, and identifying the language of choice for meetings etc.

Where there are gaps we would endeavour to work towards compliance bearing in mind resource and financial constraints.

75. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

If a proportionate and realistic approach can be agreed as to the way we seek to implement these Standards, we would be able to work towards compliance but there would be resource implications, both staff and financial, and issues with translation capacity.

Additional service delivery standards to those listed in Schedule 9

Activity 17: Public events

76. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

77. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for public events [39-40]

78. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Currently our Scheme relates to public exhibitions and displays where titles and captions are bilingual with every effort being made to ensure parity for both languages. However, our Scheme also ensures that bilingual publications, publicity and signage for the public are all covered in other sections of the Scheme.

79. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43. If the public event were to be an exhibition/display, etc, then there would be limitations due to the information to impart, the size of the display, accessibility issues etc. In all our work we must be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 as well as the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and a reasonable and proportionate approach will be required especially in these financially stringent times.

The difficulties faced in complying with this Standard relates primarily to the cost element of providing such materials.

Physical display/exhibition material usually requires a highly professional finish and while we would be conscious of meeting our obligation, in today's financial climate we are finding it difficult to provide highly professional material in one language only.

Activity 18: Corporate identity and branding

80. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

81. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for corporate identity and branding [78]

82. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

This is already in our Scheme – and parity is given to both English and Welsh Languages. The Council has established a bilingual corporate image that reflects the nature of the area and the public it serves.

83. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Activity 19: Courses

84. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

85. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for courses [79-81]

86. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

This is not something that is currently in our Scheme.

87. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

This will be unreasonable given the level of staff employed – not feasible due to recruitment issues. Also some staff deal with specialist areas which generate income for the Council and application of the Standard would put posts and this income at risk.

The Council unfortunately does not have the required capacity and ability to deliver training courses through the medium of Welsh at this time. Celtic leisure who manage the Council's leisure centres would also experience similar constraints.

Activity 20: Public address systems

88. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes No

89. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes No

Proposed standards for public address systems [82-83]

90. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

This is partially covered in our Scheme and would be able to meet the requirements to a limited extent, we currently aim to provide our services in Welsh and where we make audible messages we would attempt to comply.

91. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

Potentially unreasonable in respect of the vehicle reversing messages which are currently with English first – may not be possible or if possible it may not be cheap to have this amended.

It would not be proportionate to change systems in light of current financial climate.

Activity 21: Databases

92. Does the organization carry out the activity in question?

Yes [] No []

93. Does the organization carry out the activity in question in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards relating to databases [84-85]

94. If the organization carries out the activity in question in Welsh, please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard(s), if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

On the intranet there is a Directory of Welsh Speakers, which list those Council employees, who are willing to act as facilitators between employees and members of the public that wish to speak in Welsh. In addition there is a Public Directory for Welsh Correspondence on the intranet, which lists those members of the public or organisations that have either written to the Council in Welsh and/or have confirmed their preference to have correspondence and any other documents from the Council in Welsh or a bilingual format.

Work will be undertaken to determine the most appropriate method of collecting, updating and recording this information while being mindful of our current limitations. The current database and information held is in English with some bilingual content.

Information is held in respect of Welsh correspondence only.

95. Do you consider that making the proposed standards relating to this activity specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

The database that we currently use is for internal use and as such there is no requirement for the database to be set up Welsh, although the information can be held bilingually.

However there is some issue with the effectiveness of such databases and a complete review of our systems would be required to determine the most effective way the information can be captured and stored.

This could potentially be time consuming, resource intensive and costly.

96. Are there any other services delivery activities provided by the organization which have not been previously noted within the questionnaire?

Yes [] No []

If 'Yes', please provide information and/or evidence of those services.

Section 3 – Policy making standards [86-94]

97. Please provide information and/or evidence demonstrating to what extent the organization assesses and monitors the effects of those policy decisions, whether positive or adverse, on:

- a) opportunities for other persons to use the Welsh language
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process addresses the impact of all new policy decisions, as well as any revision of policy, on protected groups as well the Welsh Language.

We will continue to work towards these Standards.

98. Having considered the requirements of standards numbered 89-91, does the organization consult on any policy decisions?

Yes [] No []

99. Please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization discusses and asks for opinions on the effect, whether positive or adverse, a policy would have on the following:

- a) opportunities for other persons to use the Welsh language
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process addresses the impact of all new policy decisions, as well as any revision of policy, on protected groups as well the Welsh Language.

We will continue to work towards these Standards.

100. Please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization assesses the effect, whether positive or adverse, that awarding a grant would have on:

- a) opportunities for other persons to use the Welsh language
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

This is something that we would be working towards.

101. Do you consider that making the proposed policy making standards specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43. We would be able to work towards these standards and the processes we have in place at present provide a foundation for this work. However to implement these in their entirety would cause unreasonable and disproportionate work. However incremental change through the natural development of current practices would be a more reasoned approach.

Section 4 – Operational standards [95-120]

Proposed standards for the use of the Welsh language in internal administration [95-100]

102. Does the organization provide the following documents in Welsh if required by the employee or worker?

- I. contract of employment
Yes [] No []
- II. a worker's contract for services
Yes [] No []
- III. documents produced by the organization setting out an employee's or worker's job description and/or job objectives
Yes [] No []
- IV. documents outlining an employee's training requirements
Yes [] No []
- V. documents outlining an employee's performance objectives for any given period
Yes [] No []
- VI. documents setting out or recording an employee's career plan
Yes [] No []
- VII. documents relating to leave policies and application forms for leave
Yes [] No []
- VIII. documents in relation to a grievance procedure brought by, or in relation to, an employee
Yes [] No []
- IX. documents in relation to a disciplinary procedure brought against an employee or in relation to which the employee is providing evidence
Yes [] No []

103. Please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard [95], if that standard was to be made specifically applicable to them.

We are not currently required to provide this documentation in Welsh. Where the HR team receive requests from employees to provide documentation in Welsh we have accommodated this – to date, one employee has requested his Statement of Particulars and Conditional Offer letter in Welsh. We were able to have the documents translated within a few days of the request

If requests are received for documents to be translated, HR will forward to the Welsh Language Translation Unit.

If this is on a more extensive scale than at present, there will be cost implications and it would need to be established if the Welsh translation service will be able to cope with an increased demand

We do have a number of ‘template’ letters which we provide to the Welsh medium schools to use.

104. By ticking the relevant boxes, please specify in which language the organization publishes policies in relation to the following? If the documents are available bilingually, both boxes should be ticked.

- I. conduct of employees and/or workers in the workplace
Welsh [] English []
- II. health and wellbeing
Welsh [] English []
- III. pay and benefits
Welsh [] English []
- IV. performance management
Welsh [] English []
- V. absence from work
Welsh [] English []
- VI. working conditions
Welsh [] English []
- VII. working patterns.
Welsh [] English []

105. Please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standard [96], if that standard was to be made specifically applicable to them.

We have received a request from the Welsh Language Schools to do this and we are intending to action this in 2014 / 2015 (Schools policies only).

1. Determine which policies need translation (i.e. there are around 10 policies that could be described as about the 'conduct of employees in the workplace')
2. Establish budget for translation
3. Prioritise documents for translation
4. Establish availability of welsh translation service

NB: every time a policy is revised (some policies are updated annually) re-translation will be required.

Proposed standards for ICT and support materials [101-104]

106. Does the organization provide Welsh language spell check and grammar checking systems for employees and workers?

Yes [] No []

107. Does the organization provide Welsh language interfaces for software where an interface already exists?

Yes [] No []

108. Does the organization operate an intranet system?

Yes [] No []

109. Are intranet pages available in Welsh, including the interface and menus?

Yes [] No []

110. Please provide information and/or evidence to demonstrate to what extent the organization is able to comply with the proposed standards [101-104], if those standards were to be made specifically applicable to them.

Significant investment would be required to meet these Standards and would require diverting limited resources from the work being undertaken to enhance public experience of our website and electronic systems.

Proposed standards for Welsh language skills – planning and training the workforce [105-110]

111. Does the organization implement a Welsh language skills strategy?

Yes [] No []

112. Please provide information and/or evidence demonstrating to what extent the organization carries out the following:

- I. assessing its employees and workers' Welsh language skills
- II. assessing the need for Welsh language skills before advertising a vacant or new post
- III. placing its employees and workers in order to comply with current Welsh language scheme requirements
- IV. enabling its employees and workers to develop Welsh language skills in order for the organization to comply with current Welsh language scheme requirements
- V. provide Welsh medium training in the following areas (recruitment and interviewing, performance management, grievance and disciplinary procedures, induction training, dealing face to face with the public, health and safety)
- VI. provide Welsh medium training on issues concerning the effective use of Welsh in meetings, interviews, grievance and discipline procedures.

- i. Applicants are asked to complete an equalities questionnaire as part of the recruitment process and the information is recorded on Vision, the Council's personnel and payroll system, on appointment.
Existing staff complete similar questionnaires as part of routine data collection which will be refined as part of a new HR system
- ii. 'A Guide to the Designation of Posts'
- iii. 'A Guide to the Designation of Posts'
- iv. 'A Guide to the Designation of Posts' is in being but as we are experiencing a recruitment freeze there is little opportunity for this to be utilised. However Social Services will consider language and recruitment as part of their work with the 'More than Just Words' Strategy and Action Plan
- v. We do not carry out these activities through the medium of Welsh as there is no requirement to do so under our current Scheme
- vi. We do not carry out these activities through the medium of Welsh as there is no requirement to do so under our current Scheme

113. Does the organization offer training opportunities in Welsh to its employees and workers?

i. during working hours

Yes [] No []

ii. outside working hours

Yes [] No []

114. Does the organization offer training courses to its employees and/or workers in the following areas:

i. Welsh language awareness

Yes [] No []

ii. requirements placed on the organization to implement Welsh language scheme

Yes [] No []

iii. using the Welsh language in the workplace

Yes [] No []

115. Does the organization provide information to raise employees' and/or workers' awareness of the Welsh language in each induction course?

Yes [] No []

116. Please provide information and/or evidence on those arrangements below.

Staff Awareness

Employees are regularly reminded of the requirements in respect of the Welsh language and the Employee Guidance which is available on the intranet. The guidance is scheduled to be updated specifically in light of personnel changes.

Members of the Welsh Language Interest Group were asked to volunteer help with events or teach skills through the medium of Welsh as part of Menter Iaith CNPT's Aman Tawe Pilot Scheme, which aims to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language

(Annual Monitoring Report 2012-2013)

Welsh Language Training

The Council runs four levels of Welsh language courses for its employees, which provides them with open college network accreditation.

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

(Annual Monitoring Report 2012-2013)

Language Awareness Training

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

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

(Annual Monitoring Report 2012-2013)

Proposed standards for recruitment [111-115]

117. Please provide information and/or evidence of the methodology used by the organization in order to come to a decision on the Welsh language skills required when advertising a vacant or new post.

So that the requirements of this Scheme can be fulfilled, Heads of Service and their Senior Officers will examine the linguistic needs of the service they provide. In doing this they will be able to establish a recruitment programme suitable to their individual departmental requirements.
General guidelines have been prepared to assist them in this process and they will be made available on the intranet.

The Council intends that:

- When vacant posts are being filled, the Welsh language will be seen as a skill alongside other skills which are required to fill the post.
- When drawing up job descriptions and person specifications careful consideration will be given to any potential need for oral or written abilities in Welsh. In such cases the Council will consider whether a post may be deemed 'Welsh Essential' or 'Welsh Desirable'.

Guidance on designating posts is available electronically to all members of staff.

118. Please provide information and/or evidence regarding the number and percentage of posts advertised with necessary Welsh language skills during the past year.

Number:

Percentage: Welsh Essential (21) 6% Welsh Desirable (321) 94%

119. Does the organization provide the following documents in Welsh?

- I. application forms
Yes [] No []
- II. job descriptions
Yes [] No []
- III. explanatory material regarding the application process
Yes [] No []
- IV. information on the recruitment process
Yes [] No []
- V. information regarding interviews or other means of assessment
Yes [] No []

120. Do the application forms provide a space for the applicant to note that they would like to be interviewed in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for signage [116-119]

121. Are the signs displayed inside the organization's buildings in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

Proposed standards for audible announcements and messages [120]

122. Are announcements and audio messages made in the organization's buildings?

Yes [] No []

123. Does the organization make these announcements and audio messages in Welsh?

Yes [] No []

124. Do you consider that making the proposed operational standards specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

Not applicable as we do not make announcements/audio messages to staff.

Section 5 – Promotion standards [121-125]

125. Does the organization implement a strategy to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely?

Yes [] No []

126. Please provide information and/or evidence demonstrating to what extent the organization carries out the following:

- I. assessment of the Welsh language demographic profile within the community it serves
- II. assessment of the current opportunities available to use the Welsh language, and should further opportunities to use the Welsh language be provided and supported
- III. assessment of the need to fund activities designed to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language.

- i. Census 2011 data is the prime source of information.
- ii. N/A
- iii. N/A

127. Do you consider that making the proposed promotion standards specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes [] No []

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43. We would be able to work towards these Standards but would not be able to meet any of them immediately.

Section 6 – Record keeping standards [126-134]

128. Please provide information and/or evidence regarding the procedures the organization has in place to keep records of the steps taken to ensure compliance with the current Welsh language scheme. Organisations should supply any additional/new procedures that will be required, if at all, in order to comply with the proposed record keeping standards. If the organization does not feel that they can implement some of the proposed record keeping standards, relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why should be provided.

We are conscious that record keeping standards would bring with them additional workload that we are currently unable to consider. We consider it more appropriate to link the monitoring of compliance to work undertaken by our Audit Section as part of their monitoring role.

We currently record complaints in respect of compliance with our current Welsh Language Scheme which are reported in the Annual Monitoring Report. We envisage that any complaints in respect of compliance with the new Standards would be dealt with in the same way. However, depending on the extent of the Standards that are applied to us we are not in a position to determine if our current procedures will be sufficient.

129. Having considered the requirements of number 127, please provide information and/or evidence regarding the procedures the organization has in place to keep records of the following:

- I. employees' and workers' Welsh language skills
- II. assessments of the Welsh language skills requirements of vacant and new posts
- III. action taken to plan the workforce in order to ensure compliance with the current Welsh language scheme
- IV. training offered through the medium of Welsh, and the numbers who attend the training.

- i. Recording the Welsh language skills of our staff is part of the data collection processes employed by HR.
- ii. Currently posts are assessed for Welsh Language requirements before advertising and designated Welsh Language essential or desirable. The requirements are recorded accordingly.
- iii. While we acknowledge this is a requirement in our Scheme with the diminishing opportunities to recruit new members of staff and the ER/VR programmes reducing staff levels over a number of years our ability to meet our current requirements have been greatly affected.
- iv. We do not provide training through the medium of Welsh.

130. Having considered the requirements of standards numbered 128-134, please provide information and/or evidence of the procedures the organization has in place to keep records of complaints that come to hand regarding the organization's compliance with the current Welsh language scheme.

Any comments or complaints in relation to the Welsh Language Scheme will be dealt with through the Council's Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure. All complaints in respect of the Welsh Language Scheme are monitored by the implementation Officer and are reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.

The Annual Monitoring Report is presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee to comment on/approve prior to forwarding it to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

131. Do you consider that making the proposed record keeping standards specifically applicable to your organization would be reasonable and proportionate?

Yes No

If 'No', please explain which aspects of the standards appear to be unreasonable or disproportionate in your opinion. Provide relevant information and/or evidence on the reasons why, in your opinion, it would be unreasonable or disproportionate to make the proposed standard specifically applicable to your organization.

We can meet this Standard 'in part'. Please refer to Further Comments on page 43.

Please see Question 128

Section 7 – Further information

132. Please provide information and/or evidence of partnerships on which the organization leads either strategically or financially, for the purposes of delivering services.

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

133. Please provide information and/or evidence of partnerships which the organization is part of, either strategically or financially, for the purposes of delivering services.

Think Family Partnership Board
City Region Partnership
Western Bay Health and Social Care Collaborative
Education through Regional Working (ERW)
Regional Waste Collaborative

134. Please provide information and/or evidence of any consortia which the organization is part of for the purposes of supplying services.

Please See Question 133

135. Please provide information and/or evidence of the services provided by the organization by a contractor or third party. Details should be provided regarding the organization's monitoring procedures for those contracts, stating how you ensure that third parties provide those services in accordance with the relevant sections of the current Welsh language scheme.

Information on this has been included in our Annual Monitoring Report, an extract as an example of our work in monitoring contacts is included here:

Care Services

Background

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

Using the “Contracting Out Public Service Contracts and the Welsh Language” document, a telephone questionnaire was undertaken with a snapshot of 10 providers of residential care.

Next Steps

Again, as in the previous year, officers within Social Services, Health and & Housing will work closely with providers and target areas for improvement based on the survey results; over time these areas will be reviewed.

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

Officers within the directorate are currently working towards the strategic framework for Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care, ‘More Than Just Words’, and the six key objectives contained within the document. A draft action plan has been formulated to meet these objectives which will allow officers to focus on Welsh speakers receiving services that meet their needs as a natural part of their care arrangements.

136. Are there any planned or proposed changes to the organization's services (e.g. outsourcing services) that will affect the answers to this questionnaire?

Yes [] No []

If 'Yes', please provide information and/or evidence of those services, in accordance with the proposed timetable below.

Further comments:

Financial Constraints

The Council has less money available to spend on services than ever before due to the UK Government's public sector spending decisions. Coupled with this pressure on our major services continues to increase in terms of demand and expectation. With less resources available this year and for future years to come, the Council will need to work even more efficiently and effectively, to maintain services and improve where we can. Under these very challenging conditions we may not be able to improve on some services and in some cases performance may drop. There will be a major step change in how we deliver our services and inevitably we will have to stop delivering some services and deliver others in a very different way to what people may expect.

Achieving the budget savings of some £17.3 million for the coming year has been the toughest to date and difficult decisions on cuts have been unavoidable as a consequence. The savings have been identified as a result of a prolonged and intense professional and Cabinet Member input, which has examined current service provision and then proposed, over the longer term, fundamental changes in the way the Council operates and delivers its services.

Key Constraints

While we remain committed in ensuring parity for the Welsh Language in dealing with members of the public, in the current climate we anticipate that the WLC will take seriously her responsibility in the proportionality of introducing the Standards.

Although there is a general acceptance of the principle of the Standards the specific application of Standards to NPTCBC must be considered with caution.

The lack of additional resources to accompany the application of the Standards, the issues around translation capacity and the current, and continuing, situation of recruitment, both into and within the Council, will have considerable impact on our ability to meet the Standards if all are applied to us immediately.

We will not be able to meet the Standards in full without additional resources and capacity. It is estimated that the additional cost to comply with the Standards would be £1m-£2m.

For many of the Standards it is difficult to state 'yes' or 'no' as to whether making the proposed Standard applicable to the Council would be reasonable and proportionate due to the above constraints. We can comply 'in part' and have indicated this in the accompanying narrative for those Standards. However, because this is not given as an option, we have responded by stating that it would not be reasonable or proportionate to apply those particular Standards. Examples of particular Standards we can meet 'in part' and work towards achieving follow:

Service Delivery

- Personal meetings
- Public Meetings
- Publicity and Advertising
- Public Exhibitions
- Publications
- Website and Online Services
- Signage
- Official notices
- Events
- Public Address Systems

Policy Making Standards

Operational Standards

Promotion Standards

Record Keeping Standards

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

This questionnaire should be sent to standards.investigation@cyg-wlc.org