

APPENDIX C

Summary of comments received with officer responses

Comments received	Response
In opposition	
<p>The goal of creating confident and enduring Welsh speakers (in the English medium sector) is going to be far too difficult in my opinion. It is not possible for an English medium school to create a Welsh speaker! If that was possible or likely, then there would be an argument for not having Welsh-medium schools!</p>	<p>Officer response: It is the aim of Welsh government to gradually change school categorisation in order to create more bilingual schools. As a local authority we must adhere to these changes as they arise.</p>
<p>Just because the Welsh government think it's a good idea to try and force the learning of Welsh language on people doesn't mean that the majority of people want it. It is of no practical use in today's world. A choice of modern second language such as French or German etc. would be of far more use. If people want a Welsh medium school for their child then there should be provision for it but to push it on all children is unacceptable and people should have the choice of an all English speaking school</p>	<p>Officer response: The local authority fully supports Welsh Government's 2050 Welsh Language strategy.</p>
<p>In general, therefore, as a result of the lack of ambition and lack of strategic vision in this plan, results in the authority failing in the aim set out in the Welsh Government's 2050 Welsh language policy of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and creating a statutory education system that will increase the number of confident Welsh speakers.</p>	<p>Officer response: Welsh Government request an increase of between 27-31%, therefore the set target of 31% for NPT is very ambitious and at the top of the upper range.</p>

Suggested amendments

In order to maintain consistency with the rest of the document, and to comply with Welsh Government guidelines, the Menter believes that the wording of this outcome should change from 'reviewing the demand for provision for Welsh-medium education' to 'CREATE Demand for Provision...'

Officer response:

We agree and the plan will be amended appropriately.

That pattern is also reflected in the coverage of how many pupils achieve qualifications through the medium of Welsh. This requires a purposeful plan and effective collaboration with Qualifications Wales to ensure the availability of qualifications particularly in vocational areas, offered to pupils from the age of 14

Officer response:

We agree and the plan will be amended appropriately. This work will be discussed further with WJEC and national exam boards.

While your plan notes the importance of having a suitable workforce for the existing schools developed as a result of these plans, the discussion on this area is generally superficial.

Officer response:

We agree and the plan will be amended appropriately. The need for staff will be increased as the demand for Welsh-medium increases. The authority recognises its proactive role in promoting opportunities to engage with the workforce across the whole range of Local Authority services. One of the main responsibilities of the Promotion Officer will be to facilitate this work - commence September 2022.

The department requires a much more rigorous data assessment this is to set the baseline for targets to be implemented. There is a clear geographical deficit in the provisions Welsh medium childcare and needs mapping geographical gaps so that the issue can be addressed gaps this systematically.

Officer response:

We agree and the plan will be amended and this will be set as a target. The Council commits to creating an operational plan to ensure that pre-school provision is available throughout the county by 2024.

<p>Where will the other two schools be? When will it be opened?</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. The initial plan for opening the second school in the south east of the county will be in place by 2024. The location of the third School will be confirmed will be in the second half of the scheme.</p>
<p>The commitment to deliver a third Welsh-medium primary school proposal within the lifetime of the plan is vague and vague. We understand that it is not possible to provide too much detail about schemes that do not wish to be developed until the second half of the plan period, but it would be useful to include some indication of likely location, nature of provision, and approximate timetable for development, delivery, and implementing the plan.</p>	<p>Officer response: See the above response.</p>
<p>The document states that establishing latecomer immersion provision will also enable secondary level learners to access Welsh-medium education. It is not clear how the commitments made in relation to outcome 2 will also provide for the secondary sector. We think this needs to be expanded upon.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. The long and short term aims are outlined in the plan. Also, the following statements have been added: The provision will be piloted from April 2022 until the end of the summer term, with a view to securing permanent immersion provision for all late comers to Welsh medium education from September 2022.</p> <p>We will look to establish provision for the secondary School in the second half of the WESP with the aim of ensuring provision for late comers to Welsh medium education and pupils who are now in the system but need intensive linguistic support.</p>

<p>If there are plans to move schools along the continuum this needs to be stated in this plan. Many local authorities are currently in the process of doing this and so expertise is developing. It would have been helpful to set out this intention in this plan including which schools.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. The authority intends to identify two schools that will have the potential to move along the linguistic continuum by the second half of the scheme.</p>
<p>Although Outcomes 3 and 4 contain a lot of relevant information and action points, we believe that these sections could be strengthened by discussing in more detail how the Council will develop and expand provision in the future. These sections do not adequately explain the implications of the growth of primary education on the secondary sector in the second half of the plan's life and beyond.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. By the second half of the WESP, with the growth at KS2 the Bro Dur site will reach full capacity of 650; an increase of 150. As a result of this growth we will need to consider expanding the capacity within Welsh medium secondary education.</p>
<p>What messages are being sent out to prevent pupils from transferring from Welsh primary education to English medium secondary education? Do we need to reinforce the message about the importance of transition from one period to the next in the by the county? How can this be done?</p>	<p>Officer response: There will be central messages through our new policy to ensure that pupils are encouraged to stay in Welsh-medium education when transferring from one key stage to the next. This has now been included in the WESP.</p>
<p>There is no mention in this outcome of where the partners are geographically. It would be good to see evidence of county-wide community activities.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. By September 2022, the county's agencies and third sector services will have introduced a baseline and targets that will demonstrate their intention to increase community activities. We will track and evaluate the targets annually using quantitative and qualitative data.</p>

<p>It will also be important to note how many additional staff there will be needed for the increasing numbers of pupils and new schools which will open in the life of this plan and how will the county will actively promote these jobs and support development education workforce professionals.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. To fulfil the aspiration of opening three schools over the 10 year period we will need to ensure at least three head teachers, a senior team for each school, class teachers and assistants during the establishment and development of each school.</p>
<p>Does the authority have a Welsh Education workforce support plan to show how the professional support service will contribute to a skilled and competent workforce? How many of the support workforce who can speak Welsh and provide support through the medium of Welsh? This is not clear. (Outcome 7)</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended.</p> <p>The authority commits to ensuring a professional support service that can speak Welsh by appointing and upskilling employees currently in the system.</p> <p>We will establish a workforce forum by September 2022 to respond to recruitment gaps and challenges in the authority. The information gathered will form part of the national workforce strategy</p>
<p>There is no mention of the areas of expertise currently available through the medium of Welsh or those that need to be developed. Will there be cross county collaboration? What will this look like in the first 5 years? With an increase in learners over the next decade it is inevitable that learners will also have increasing needs. It is essential that the specific specialisms to address the support of these learners and staff in schools, through ongoing specific training programs, are clearly reflected in the document. We wish to see much more detail on this</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended. This will be included in the introduction to Outcome 6.</p> <p>The authority comits to develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Trebannws, ensuring that this is a gradual, steady process transitioning from predominantly English-medium provision that exists, to a bilingual provision and eventually to a fully Welsh-medium provision</p>

<p>as the document ready to be presented to the minister at the end of January.</p>	<p>We will include the provision of a 16 place Welsh Medium learning support centre in the plans to build a replacement YGG Rhosafan, as part of NPT's 21st Century Schools Programme Band C proposals</p>
<p>Under the heading of 'Key Data', the Menter would like to suggest more ambitious targets than the minimum required by Government. NPT must reach 31% of 5 year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh, but why not aim for higher</p>	<p>Officer response: Welsh Government request an increase between 27-31%, therefore the set target of 31% for NPT it at the top of the upper range. These targets will be reviewed annually and amended when needed</p>
<p>The Menter would like to see a specific operational plan for ensuring transfer rates from Welsh-medium primary schools to Welsh-medium secondary schools</p>	<p>Officer response: This can be found within the cluster development plan and can be shared with all interested parties.</p>
<p>I wonder if there is an opportunity here to invest more in this (Mudiad Meithrin) by funding extra hours for mobile Ti a Fi Officers to ensure provision across the County?</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be discussed and considered further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>A clear progression route for families should be identified, Cylch Meithrin / Primary / Secondary.</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>The importance of early years vocational courses should be included in this outcome (outcome 4)</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>I would like to see more concrete steps towards securing specialist Welsh language support for all children with additional learning needs in the county rather than addressing the emerging need at the time</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>

<p>I would like the county to note the steps of how the families will be aware that a Welsh medium service is available to every child</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>There is a need to increase the early year's workforce under Outcome 7. There is a shortage of qualified Welsh-speaking practitioners in education and early years. It is vitally important that there are opportunities for practitioners to follow Welsh medium childcare courses</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended appropriately.</p>
<p>Should the county consider the need to conduct training on the language immersion method across the county? As we know, Welsh-medium immersion education gives children the best opportunity to be fully bilingual. All of these schemes can be accessed through Mudiad Meithrin.</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan will be amended appropriately.</p>
<p>However, neither the expansion of the workforce in Additional Learning Education (ALN) providers is prioritized, nor are the aims of Outcome 6 as a whole in providing equal support in Welsh and English to learners with severe and complex ALN needs- ESTYN</p>	<p>Officer response: We agree and the plan has been amended appropriately.</p>
<p>Outcome 3- At present there is no significant discussion in your plan about the educational provision for learners after leaving the compulsory sector. To ensure the plan is complete we strongly believe that attention needs to be given to progression routes to sixth forms / FE colleges and subsequently, where relevant, to universities and the world of work</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>There are few targets and plans in this section to support and develop Welsh as a subject. There is a need to plan purposefully and proactively to ensure that any pupil who wishes to study the subject</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>

<p>at A level has the opportunity to do so. Fair and consistent consideration should be given to Welsh as a subject when planning A level options</p>	
<p>That pattern is also reflected in the coverage of how many pupils achieve qualifications through the medium of Welsh. There needs to be a purposeful plan in this area and effective collaboration with Qualifications Wales to ensure the availability of qualifications especially in vocational areas, offered to pupils from the age of 14 onwards.</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>
<p>Access to nursery education. There is no statutory transport provision at that age, and I believe there is a need to expand the provision beyond that currently envisaged in the WESP to ensure it is closer to families in some areas.</p>	<p>Officer response: We recognise that this is a concern; a steering group will be set up to look around issues of transport and accessibility for pupils wishing to access Welsh-medium education</p>
<p>Answers are also needed why YGYBD for many years has the lowest budget share of the county's schools.</p>	<p>Officer response: All school budgets for secondary and middle schools within the Authority are calculated using the same factors and formula The formula is primarily based on the number of pupils enrolled at each school and the full-time staffing structures within each individual school. The formula is a mechanism of providing monies to schools and may not reflect the number of people that the school has employed.</p>
<p>There is a need for the LEA to monitor progress together with the development of bilingualism in second-language schools.</p>	<p>Officer response: This matter will be outlined further during the detailed Outcome Action Plan meetings.</p>

Swansea Valley- In the context of the WESP the project could undermine Welsh medium education and the place of Welsh in the community.	Officer response: This comment is noted
The appendix lists potential mitigation measures, but these do not accept the main finding of the independent specialist appointed by the Welsh Government that the plan is damaging, or adequately respond to the other recommendations.	Officer response: This comment is noted
The need for new, modern buildings for these schools needs to be emphasized, rather than seeing brand new English medium schools come into existence and the new Welsh medium schools then being located within the old buildings where formerly English-medium schools.	Officer response: This comment is noted
It would be helpful to link this up with any strategic plan which supports Welsh language employment opportunities. These benefits/opportunities would support parental decision making from an early age	Officer response: As from 2022, the WESP plan will align with the new Neath Port Talbot Welsh Promotion Strategy (new Welsh Promotion Strategy consultation period to commence 2022).
In support :	
There is much to welcome in the new draft WESP. It aims to seriously tackle the challenges facing the language and Welsh medium education, and is much more creative than earlier WESPs.	
Overall, it is an ambitious plan which aims to enable all learners, families and carers to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life-ESTYN	

Challenging targets are included within this Plan with goals incorporated into appropriate plans within the outcomes- ESTYN	
Menter Iaith Neath Port Talbot is pleased to see the proposal to open 3 new Welsh-medium primary schools within the 10 year plan period	
The opening of the Bro Dur campus in the south of the county is a significant step in securing a successful future of Welsh-medium education within the county	
The Menter is very pleased to see that the Local Authority recognizes the importance of creating the demand for Welsh-medium education and not just responding to the demand	
Menter 's full support for many of the statements under Outcome 4, and specifically to the point of' employing a Welsh in Education Promotion Officer'	
The Menter supports the statements to expand and build on the success of 'Gid Tanio'r ddraig' and looks forward to how this work will continue	
The Menter is looking forward to seeing a significant increase in the number of staff within the authority who can speak Welsh, especially when considering the need to staff the new Welsh-medium primary schools that are to open under the new plan	
Mudiad Meithrin welcomes the county's recognition for working together to provide early Welsh language opportunities for all young	

children and their families and to develop services in areas where there is no pre-school early years provision	
We very much welcome your acknowledgment for the importance of messages in the periods before and after birth	
We commend the appropriate effort to provide activities for learners to continue their education while pursuing Welsh as a subject as well as courses more widely, for example in the post-16 sector when planning to expand the offer of vocational courses through the medium of Welsh (ESTYN)	
Overall, the aims of the outcomes are coherent, comprehensive and mutually supportive within the WESP (ESTYN)	
We support this work, which is incorporated in Appendix A of this Plan, in order to protect, promote and develop the Welsh language in this valley when planning purposefully for the future (ESTYN)	
We support the decision to appoint a consultant to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education and produce a marketing campaign, and to address the reduction of surplus places in the north of LA	
The overdue commitment to establish three new Welsh primary schools over the 10 years of the plan is particularly welcome.	
Overall, I'm very happy to see the direction of the scheme ... This scheme, if implemented, contributes well to re-establishing the language in our area	

Overall an appropriately stretching and very positive plan with clear objectives and ways to get there	
The Menter is looking forward to seeing the developments of the Local Authority website, and hopes to see information at every opportunity that shares the benefits of Welsh-medium education and promotes the opportunities within the county	
General comments:	
The Authority must also consider actions arising from the impact of opening a new English medium school in the Pontardawe area in order to safeguard the language locally. This is a job for the whole authority and not just the education department	Officer response: This comment is noted
The Menter would like to see how the County Council and departments within the Council (eg the Council's Youth Services) intend to support the Initiative and other partners in their work during the plan's period	Officer response: This comment is noted
As it is a 10 year plan how will progress be measured? How will transparency be ensured?	Officer response: The WESP will be monitored annually by Welsh Government. Additionally it is intended that the progress of the Outcome Action Plans will be reported on a termly basis to the WESP forum and will also inform the annual monitoring report which will be presented to members.

<p>An annual assessment will be positive, but there will also be a need for flexible responses to increased demand e.g. in areas of population growth.</p>	<p>Officer response: This comment is noted</p>
<p>Welsh Government have announced revised categories for Welsh medium education, does this affect the draft WESP?</p>	<p>Officer response: The WESP will be reviewed and developed further, in line with new WG guidelines when available.</p>
<p>It needs to be explained that other secondary schools are not in a position to offer the wide range of education and other opportunities through the medium of Welsh that maintain the language skills of pupils from Welsh medium primaries.</p>	<p>Officer response: This comment is noted</p>
<p>The idea of creating three more Welsh-medium primary schools within the decade is ambitious, and to be welcomed, but these developments need to happen "early" rather than late during the ten-year period</p>	<p>Officer response: This comment is noted</p>