

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet (Policy and Resources) Sub Committee

4 October 2022

Report of the Head of People & Organisational Development – S Rees

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Annual Report 2021-2022

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Annual Report 2021-2022.

Executive Summary

2. The report provides information on progress made during April 2021-March 2022. (Appendix 1).
3. The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, and associated action plan, was adopted by Council in September 2018.
4. While progress must be reported annually there is no statutory annual reporting period, unlike many of the Council's other plans or strategies.
5. 2021-2022 has seen a return to some form of normality although the repercussions of the pandemic, enforced restrictions and subsequent impact on health and the working lives of residents and staff continue to be felt.
6. While progress has been made in many areas there are some actions that have not been progressed as much as anticipated for a variety of factors. However, with the review and next iteration of the Strategy to be developed in time for publication in April 2023 there is now an opportunity to take a fresh look at how to better promote the language in light of current, as well as anticipating future, circumstances.

Background

7. Standard 145 (Promotion) of the Welsh Language Standards requires the Council to produce and publish on the website a 5 year Strategy that sets out how it proposes to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in the area.
8. The Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and action plan were adopted by Council on 26 September 2018. The first progress report for the period October 2018-September 2019 was approved by Cabinet in December 2019.
9. In February 2021 Cabinet approved the realignment of the reporting period to mirror that for other statutory plans. This is the first full year annual report under the new arrangements.

Progress April 2021 - March 2022

10. The Annual Report for 2021-2022 highlights progress against a backdrop of upheaval and change; changes to working practices, changes in priorities both for residents and services.
11. While progress has been made in many areas there are some actions that have not been progressed as much as anticipated; primarily due to the outbreak of the pandemic, the reprioritising of services as well as the ongoing changes that we as a council and our partner organisations have had to make during the intervening period.
12. The Strategy is currently being reviewed with the next iteration of the Strategy to be published by April 2023. There is now an opportunity to better align the Strategy with recent developments in the Welsh language locally, and activities to support, as well as key strategic documents both locally and nationally.

Financial Appraisal

13. There are no additional financial impacts attached to the implementation of the Strategy as all actions have been developed within budgetary constraints.

Integrated Impact Assessment

14. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment.

Valleys Communities Impact

15. Progress against a number of actions in the action plan will help promote and support the Welsh language within the valley communities.

Workforce Impact

16. There are no direct workforce impacts associated with the Strategy as all actions have been developed taking into account our current workforce and resources.

Legal Impact

17. This report sets out how the Council meets its legal duty under the Welsh Language Standards which has been referenced in the body of this report.

Risk Management

18. There are no direct risk management impacts associated with the report however; there may be a financial risk to the Council for failure to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

Consultation

19. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

20. It is recommended that Cabinet (Policy and Resources) Sub Committee considers and approves the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021– 2022.
21. It is recommended that the Head of People and Organisational Development be given delegated authority to make such changes as may be needed to the Annual Report prior to publication, provided that such changes do not materially alter the content of the document considered by Cabinet (Policy and Resources) Sub Committee.

Appendix

22. Appendix 1 – Welsh Language Promotion Strategy – Annual Report 2021- 2022.

List of Background Papers

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and action plan www.npt.gov.uk/30359

Officer Contact

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