

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Progress Report for the period October 2018-September 2019

The action plan sets out what we planned to achieve over the life of the strategy, 2018-2023. As a result some actions span the whole period while others have target dates within this reporting period.

The report focuses on the progress in Section 1 - Internal and 3rd party interventions under control of Neath Port Talbot CBC of the action plan and specifically:

- progress against actions with target dates of 2018 and 2019
- progress against actions with a target date of 2023

Section 2 -Interventions by partner organisations (not under control of Neath Port Talbot CBC), contains actions that have target dates primarily of 2023. Progress on this section has not yet been received from the Strategic Language Forum who are overseeing this work; this may be due to a variety of reasons including: action target dates are 2023, no or limited progress made, organisations with different reporting cycles, etc.

Due to a number of circumstances over the period the rate of progress has been mixed. Although some specific targets have been missed actions will be realised within the next year thereby bringing the plan back in line with its original timescales. In some cases actions have been partially met and again the aim is to fully meet them within the next year where appropriate.

SECTION 1 - Internal and 3rd party interventions under control of Neath Port Talbot CBC

Progress against actions with target dates of 2018 and 2019

Strategic Priority 1. Children and Young People

1.2 Education – primary sector

What we said we would do:

- Launch a county borough wide marketing campaign to promote the advantages of Welsh-medium education and the benefits of bilingualism.
- Ensure that parents are informed and are supported should they wish to continue their child's Welsh-medium education.
- Increase the number of social activities through the medium of Welsh or including Welsh culture and heritage for primary age children

What we did:

- 'Being Bilingual' booklets have been distributed to all Welsh-medium schools and most are advertising the booklet on their website.

A sub group of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Forum has been established to review and improve the Neath Port Talbot Welsh-medium education webpages. Relevant documents are currently being considered for inclusion in order to promote the advantages of Welsh-medium education.

Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot (MICNPT) has also produced a booklet specifically for NPT which offers [useful information to parents about the Welsh language](#). This booklet along with the 'Being Bilingual' booklet will be included on the new Welsh-medium education webpages.

- Melin Primary School's after school Welsh club, attended by parents and pupils, provides support to those with limited Welsh language skills. This not only ensures pupils are able to better engage with the language but also provides support and confidence to parents who may then view Welsh language education as a possibility for their child.

MICNPT holds a reading club at Ty'r Gwyrhyd which encourages and supports children to read Welsh language books. The aim of the club is to help children of all ages to improve their reading in Welsh. Children can take their own book or choose one at the club. In addition, the club also supports children with Welsh language school homework.

The WESP Forum is currently looking non-Welsh speaking parental/pupil support as part of a wider agenda of transfer of primary pupils to secondary Welsh-medium education.

- The Youth Service has helped deliver Transition Days to primary aged pupils who were transferring to Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera.

1.3 Education – secondary sector

What we said we would do:

- Work with key partners to create opportunities for children and young people to use Welsh outside of school times to strengthen the link between the language of education and the community.

What we did:

- MICNPT, in partnership and independently, hold various clubs/activities within the area. These include: Skills Club (games, crafts music and more!), run during school holidays in a variety of locations; Neath Youth Club, working with Urdd Gobaith Cymru, to provide a youth club for children over 11 years old and Stafell Stwnsh, lunchtimes at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, where pupils enjoy different activities through the medium of Welsh.

Strategic Priority 2. Families

2.1 Language Transmission in the Home

What we said we would do:

- Raise awareness of the importance of language transmission amongst young Welsh speaking adults.
- Organise a marketing campaign targeting young Welsh speaking adults.
- Provide support for parents with children in Welsh medium schools to alleviate concerns about helping with homework.
- Increase family focussed activities through the medium of Welsh.

What we did:

- Unfortunately the inclusion of general language awareness programs in personal and social education courses at either Welsh or English-medium schools has not been progressed during this period. However, discussions with relevant officers will be arranged during 2019-2020 academic year to explore how best this can be progressed.

- While the proposed campaign to promote and encourage parents to use Welsh with their children was not realised during 2018-2019 it is hoped that the WESP Forum will include this piece of work in their remit during 2019-2020; sub groups of the Forum have been proposed to address the issues of promoting access to Welsh-medium education/website; developing the workplace/Welsh beyond the classroom, e.g. collaborative working, and Early Years provision.
- The WESP Forum has recognised the issue of non-Welsh speakers possibly not realising their full potential in Welsh medium schools and will be considering actions, to possibly include homework clubs, to address this in due course.
- MICNPT is considering expanding their 'Language Awareness' booklet to make it more relevant for non-Welsh speaking parents of pupils already in a Welsh school but who may be struggling with various aspects of Welsh-medium education provision, e.g. supporting children with homework.

Strategic Priority 3. Communities

3.1 Welsh in the Community

What we said we would do:

- Ensure that leisure centres proactively promote the use of Welsh, both in terms of provision and making it visible
- Celebrate the culture and heritage of the county borough

What we did:

- Although Celtic Leisure has a Welsh Language Scheme there is currently limited provision of Welsh language classes although Welsh language swimming lessons are available. It is recognised that a lack of regular

contact with Celtic Leisure in relation to the actions in the Strategy has led to limited progress being made during 2018-2019, which will be rectified during the coming year.

- Initial discussions have been held with relevant officers to begin to explore the creation of a webpage as a resource for the celebration of the heritage and culture of the county borough. We aim to work with MICNPT, the WESP Forum and local organisations and groups during 2019-2020 to progress this with the anticipated webpage before the end of the year.

3.2 Welsh in the Workplace

What we said we would do:

- Ensure that numbers of staff are adequate for the level of Welsh being requested in order to comply with the Welsh Language Standards.
- Map current levels of Welsh language skills.
- Provide opportunities for staff to improve their language skills.
- Enable staff and elected Members to be aware of history and culture of Welsh language including compliance with Welsh language legislation.
- Provide intranet support for Welsh speakers and learners.
- Normalise the use of Welsh in the workplace.
- Develop confidence in the use of written Welsh.
- Encourage staff and Elected Members to use Welsh in internal and external meetings and in presentations.

What we did:

- There has been little progress made in the development of a Language Skills Strategy. This is a consequence of a range of factors including an ambitious original target date, a prolonged period of staff absence and a significant increase in the workload of relevant officers. In addition, a new HR system is to be introduced over the next 12-18 months which will have significant impact on the implementation of processes linked to a skills strategy. Therefore, it is considered more appropriate to develop the strategy in line with that of the system to ensure their compatibility and so are fit for purpose.
- In order to help inform the development of the Language Skills Strategy it was anticipated that a language skills audit would be undertaken. However for the reasons stated above we have not been able to progress this work. As the audit, strategy and HR system are inextricably linked it is considered more appropriate to progress all three work streams together.
- There are currently 4,000 employees registered on the employee portal (a self-service tool, which enables employees to update a range of personal data including their Welsh language skills) with 875 identifying as having some level of Welsh language skill and 828 identifying as a Welsh learner. There are some caveats in relation to the latter figures: the identification of skill level is subjective, there can be an over- or under-estimation of skill and although the portal enables the ease of updating personal data it is not always undertaken or indeed considered necessary by employees. The numbers quoted therefore cannot be relied upon.
- We have ensured that all relevant employee correspondence invites the employee to notify HR if they wish to use Welsh when dealing with HR on a personal basis as well as wishing to conduct relevant processes/procedures in the Welsh language. All HR forms and policies as identified in the Welsh Language Standards have been translated into Welsh and are available on the intranet.

- Information on the availability of Welsh language training opportunities is available on our [Welsh language training](#) intranet page. 'In the Loop' has also run articles on the subject. Training opportunities include 'Welsh for Beginners', 'Work Welsh' and 'Improve your written Welsh'. These opportunities are available to both employees and elected members.

Information on opportunities within the community to learn or improve Welsh skills have not been so widely advertised and this is something that we hope to address within the next few months

- A successful programme of Welsh language training has been rolled out to staff who wish to learn and improve their Welsh language skills in the social care sector. The programme includes a variety of training including a specialised 10 week (20 hour) face to face course and 10 hour online eLearning Work Welsh for Health & Social Care. Staff can continue their learning on Beginners Welsh lessons accredited by the WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Council).
- The training team work with managers and supervisors to raise the awareness of the Welsh language and the importance of providing the 'Active Officer' in line with the statutory requirements of the Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act and to encourage the support to staff to learn the language and support the provision of good care and support.
- Staff can access new e-learning Welsh Language Awareness Training provided by the local authority. The course offers a history to the Welsh language and the current local context.
- A number of staff have actively sought training and are currently enrolled in various levels of the Centre for Learning Welsh' online learning programmes; two staff have completed the programme since April 2019 and a further two 2 staff have completed a 10 week induction to Learning Welsh course.
- Work Welsh courses are available for staff across the Council. The courses accessed through the Centre for Learning Welsh online and come in 3 different levels:

- Work Welsh Online (58 staff enrolled) – 10 hours for staff wishing to start learning Welsh with little or no knowledge
 - Welcome Back Work Welsh (6 staff enrolled) – A follow on from the above, a further 10 hours with more depth and the content is expanded.
 - Work Welsh Advanced – (5 staff enrolled) A 10 hour course for workers who speak Welsh but have lost momentum or confidence. This course aims to re-introduce the use of the Welsh language.
- A training programme focussing on Welsh language awareness and compliance with the Welsh language standards has been developed and will be delivered by MICNPT to all accountable managers between January and March 2020. The programme has been informed by the feedback from various compliance monitoring exercises undertaken by the Welsh Language Officer Group during 2018-2019.
 - In order to support and promote the use of Welsh internally, Welsh grammar and spellcheck software, Cystill and Cysgair, has been made available to all staff and elected Members.
 - While a list of words/simple greetings has not yet been developed, the use of Welsh in meetings/events has grown organically. With Welsh speaking Members using Welsh greetings, etc., at meetings some non-Welsh speaking Members have been encouraged and have felt confident to use simple words and greetings too.

3.3 Third party organisations associated with NPT CBC

What we said we would do:

- Ensure that all groups or organisations receiving third party funding from the Council meet the Welsh language criteria of the grant

What we did:

- Welsh Language Standard requirements have been included in our third sector grant policy. Each successful organisation is required to demonstrate what effect their proposal/project will have on:
 - people's opportunities to use the Welsh language
 - treating the Welsh and English languages equally

3.4 Linking Economic Development with language**What we said we would do:**

- Ensure that all frontline Economic Development staff provide appropriate information with regard to Welsh language promotion and how it can improve business as a unique selling point.

What we did:

- The MICNPT's 'Cymraeg Byd Busnes' officer has been on maternity leave and this has led to the a lack of activity in relation to this action. It is anticipated that some progress will be made on this over the coming year.

Progress against actions with a target date of 2023

Strategic Priority 1. Children and Young people

1.1 Have a positive impact on Early Years provision

What we said we would do:

- Provide appropriate Welsh language and childcare training for early years' practitioners in order to increase Welsh-medium provision.
- Increase the number of children attending Welsh-medium early years provision.
- Increase the use of Welsh in playgroups and day nurseries that are primarily English medium.

What we did:

- A training programme has been developed for early years to support them in Welsh medium provision. The courses facilitated by PACEY (Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years, a charity dedicated to supporting everyone working in childcare and early years to provide high quality care and early learning for children and families) & Dynamix Training were well attended and received by childcare staff. The Early Years and Childcare Unit (EYCU)/Flying Start training programme for September – December 2019 included PACEY Next Steps and Welsh in Childcare courses. In addition CAMAU (a specific Learn Welsh scheme for Early Years Education and Childcare Workforce) Welsh in Childcare courses were promoted to all providers.
- Clwb Cwtsh sessions are running in Baglan and Skewen. Clwb Cwtsh is a fun-filled taster programme aimed at new Welsh learners and focusing on speaking Welsh with young children. During the course, entertainment is provided for the children, assuring that childcare is no barrier for joining.

- EYCU & MICNPT undertook a tour with Magi Ann (a Welsh story character) taking a story and singing session to 19 settings reaching over 250 children.
- The EYCU are looking to adapt and implement a version of the Welsh charter for childcare settings.
- Following a pilot session with PALS Daycare, Early Years Development Officer has offered story/singing sessions to all non-Welsh speaking settings to encourage staff to use more incidental Welsh during the sessions. MICNPT will be assisting with these sessions.
- The increase in the number of, and extension of the offer to, childcare provision amongst Welsh Flying Start settings has ensured Welsh early years provision has become more attractive to parents across the county borough:
 - An additional two settings, Cylch Tir Morfa, Georgie Porgies in Sandfields and Cylch Dechrau'n Deg in Brynhyfryd bringing the number to seven in total.
 - Cylch Cwmnedd have extended their opening hours to offer 30 hour provision.
 - Tir Morfa Cylch has relocated to a new building and now offering wraparound child care.
 - Cylch Meithrin Waunceirch extending school pick up/drop service to provide wraparound child care.

The number of children accessing Welsh Flying Start child care has risen from 104 (2017-2018) to 135 for 2018-2019, while the number of Flying Start child care places has increased from 76 (2017-2018) to 93 for 2018-2019.

- The Early Years Development Officer is
 - working with MICNPT to research and secure venues and volunteers for the Ti a Fi sessions.
 - working closely with the Family Information Service to promote Welsh.

- Welsh resources are being distributed during support visits to primarily English medium playgroups and day nurseries by the development officer. More resources are being planned to aid the promotion of Welsh.

1.2 Education – primary sector

What we said we would do:

- Increase the capacity of Welsh-medium primary schools in key locations and actively consider the opening of new Welsh medium primary schools in the not too distant future.
- Support the development and growth of the Language Charter which encourages the proactive use of Welsh in schools and in the community. Support the Second Language Charter for English medium schools.
- Consider the effects of new housing developments on the growth of Welsh-medium education or the impact on Welsh speaking communities.

What we did:

- Development of additional accommodation at YGG Castell-nedd is currently underway to meet increased capacity. Plans to increase accommodation at YGG Pontardawe and YGG Tyle'r Ynn have been agreed.
- The Welsh Language Charter has now been developed nationally and all Welsh-medium primary schools in NPT are engaged with the scheme. The all through school Ysgol Ystalyfera Bro Dur, a Welsh-medium school, is also engaged. The Charter is currently being introduced in the English-medium secondary schools by an Education through Regional Working (ERW) senior leader.
- MICNPT has been successful in obtaining section 106 monies from the Local Development Plan at Rhos in order to promote, encourage and enhance the use of the Welsh language in the local community, in order to

ensure that the Welsh language becomes an integral part of the new development at Rhos so that the new development can become part of the Welsh speaking community.

The plan will seek to provide activities and information on a wide range of linguistic issues, in order to encourage new residents to participate in the Welsh-medium community within Rhos. This range of activities will be aimed at:

- Residents in the new housing development at Rhos.
- Residents of the village of Rhos.
- Residents from near-by villages who might travel to Rhos (i.e. Bryncoch, Alltwen).

Of these, the plan will seek to ensure a variety of activities in order to appeal to:

- Pre-school age children
- Primary school children
- Secondary school children / young people
- Young People
- Adults
- Families

This action plan will also seek to ensure a variety of opportunities for first language Welsh speakers, Welsh learners and those who are yet to start learning Welsh, but who have an interest in doing so.

1.3 Education – secondary sector

What we said we would do:

- Increase number of learners in Welsh-medium secondary schools.
- Increase the number of social activities through the medium of Welsh or including Welsh culture and heritage for secondary age children.
- Encourage greater social use of Welsh by pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur.
- Provide opportunities for young people in Ystalyfera and Bro Dur to use Welsh in the community.

What we did:

- Ysgol Ystalyfera Bro Dur (south campus) opened in the south of the county borough in September 2018. Transfer rates between Welsh medium schools located in the south east of the County Borough (YGG Castell-nedd, YGG Tyle'r Ynn and YGG Rhosafan) to Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur are very high. It is expected there will be an ongoing positive impact on transfer rates over a 6 year period and beyond.

Transfer rates between Welsh medium schools located in the north west of the county borough, traditionally viewed as the Welsh speaking heartland of the authority to Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera are variable and are often low from areas such as Pontardawe, Trebanos and Gwaun Cae Gurwen. The Welsh-medium sector continue to work as a cluster to promote higher transfer rates. This is one of the issues being addressed by the WESP Forum.

- During 2018-2019:
 - Over 30 Welsh Language/Culture activities were run in the community based youth clubs. These included quizzes, cooking, arts and crafts, bingo, board games etc.
 - The Keeping in Touch Team Leader completed the Introduction to Welsh language course;

- Taibach Youth Club took their young people to watch Wales play rugby in the Millennium Stadium as part of their Welsh Culture activities;
- The Youth Service delivered two residential courses in Llangranog, one for Welsh speaking young people focusing on Welsh Culture and the second was a Junior Leaders course with bilingual aspects.
- The Youth Service has developed a Welsh Culture Agored Course which has now been translated and will be delivered in January 2020.
- The Cam Nesa team arranged a visit to St Fagans to look at Welsh Culture;
- Bryn Youth Club had a fun filled evening participating in a youth club Eisteddfod which consisted of a Welsh quiz, St Patricks Day quiz (learning about the history of the Welsh-born patron Saint of Ireland), guess the score in the Six Nations match Wales vs Ireland and best pronunciation of the famous Welsh place name 'Llanfair PG';
- Crynant Youth Club celebrated their Welsh culture by making cards to celebrate Dydd Santes Dwynwen, while also participating in a Welsh quiz and a leek eating competition;
- The young people from Cwmllynfell celebrated Dydd Santes Dwynwen and St David's Day with activities, including sampling some of the most traditional Welsh foods.
- The young people from Glynneath Youth Club participated in activities relating to Dydd Santes Dwynwen. They enjoyed learning about and discussing their Welsh heritage. Bringing their own thoughts and opinions to the activity, it ended with a fun word search competition, which encouraged the participants to develop their personal skills;
- The Youth Service has:
 - employed in partnership with Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera a Welsh language Legacy Youth Worker supporting young people who are at risk of disengagement.

- delivered activity days in Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera, young carers awareness raising session in Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera and Relationship and Sexuality sessions in Welsh.
- employed two Welsh speaking activity workers based in Cwmllynfell Youth Club. This was the first time the service has specifically recruited a Welsh language worker for youth clubs.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera were invited to take part in the Youth Council Elections that took place in the September term and will be contacted again as part of the second round of elections.

Strategic Priority 2. Families

2.1 Language transmission in the home

What we said we would do:

- Provide childcare through the medium of Welsh

What we did:

- Two new childcare centres have been established; at Cylch Tir Morfa Georgie Porgies in Sandfields and Cylch Dechrau'n Deg in Brynhyfryd.

Strategic Priority 3. Communities

3.1 Welsh in the Community

What we said we would do:

- Use communication technology to advertise employment opportunities requiring bilingual skills.

What we did:

- We have a dedicated jobs page on the intranet (to internal staff) and internet (public facing) where all vacancies are advertised, including apprenticeships,

The recruiting manager identifies whether the Welsh language is 'essential' or 'desirable' for that post and this is recorded at the time of advertising. If Welsh is 'essential' or 'desirable' the recruiting manager arranges for the advert, job description and job specification to be translated into Welsh and HR places the advert on the jobs pages.

3.2 Welsh in the workplace

What we said we would do:

- The Council to comply fully with the Welsh Language Standards.
- Create an environment that encourages greater use of Welsh.
- Promote schemes that visually illustrate that Welsh is welcomed in the workplace.
- Distribute Welsh language promotional material to staff.

What we did:

- The Welsh Language Officer Group (WLOG) continue to provide updates to the Council's Equality and Community Cohesion Group meeting.

A number of compliance testing exercises, as well as mystery shopper exercises in partnership with MICNPT, have been undertaken. Feedback from these has informed the development of a training programme, developed by MICNPT. The sessions, to be delivered between January and March 2020, will address

language awareness and reinforce compliance requirements. In addition, the Equality and Community Cohesion Group receive regular updates on complaints received via the Welsh Language Commissioner in relation to alleged non-compliance and the actions required, where appropriate.

- The WLOG ensure articles for the 'Cornel Cymraeg' section of the internal online newsletter, In the Loop, are published in each edition. Help and support resources are available on the Welsh language pages of the performance hub section of the intranet, which includes details on how to obtain lanyards, text for out of office messages, email signatures, when and how to request translation etc.
- While promotional materials are available via the WLOG and the help and support pages on the performance hub they will also be available at each language awareness/compliance training sessions during January – March 2020.

3.5 Strengthening links with the Council's key policies and strategies

What we said we would do:

- Review the Local Development Plan to strengthen the Welsh language element in relation to all areas of the county borough, not only areas of linguistic sensitivity.

What we did:

- This has been raised with planning officers who, as part of the review of the Local Development Plan, will ensure that any recommendations to strengthen policy are appropriate and achievable.