

MEETING	Language Committee
DATE	April 16 2013
TITLE	Report on the Success of Gwynedd Council Leisure Centres Language Champions Project
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	Present an update and final report on the Gwynedd Council Leisure Centres Language Champions Project
AWDUR	Gwenno Williams Senior Operations Manager
RECOMMENDATION	For information

1. Background

In 2011, funding was received from the Welsh Language Board as part of the Bilingual Workplaces scheme to train and develop Language Champions within Leisure Centres. As part of the scheme, training was provided for 13 Gwynedd Leisure Centres language Champions, and this has meant that we have Champions for all our Centres in Gwynedd.

2. Core Responsibilities of the Language Champions

The Champions have many responsibilities, here are some of them.

- Communicate information to staff on language needs and matters related to the Welsh language
- Leading by example
- Supporting learners and under-confident Welsh speakers to use the Welsh language in the workplace

3. Advantages of Language Champions to the Workforce

- Increase language awareness among staff
- Cultivate good language practice in the workplace
- Increase staff confidence to use to use the Welsh language
- Encourage staff professional development by ensuring language courtesy and customer care

4. Advantages of Language Champions for the Council

- Improve service for the customer
- Strengthen the service to meet customers' wishes
- Support the Welsh Language Education Scheme

5. Steps taken by the Operational Unit

- The Language Scheme is relevant to everyone and its effective implementation is the responsibility of every staff member within our leisure Centres. Leading on from this, each Language Champion is expected to lead their team through example, to support and mentor learners and speakers. This takes place daily in our leisure Centres through answering the telephone, at the start of each conversation, conversation between staff, writing notes and e-mails in Welsh. In addition, all staff meetings now have Welsh agendas and notes. The role of the Champion is to converse, help and be a friend and mentor to encourage under-confident learners/speakers to speak Welsh...
- When delivering swimming, gymnastics, tennis and other lessons for schools through the medium of Welsh, we strengthen the Welsh Language Education Scheme and ensure opportunities for children and young people to learn through the language of their schools.
- As part of the Unit's Technical Team Unit's Business Plan and work, arrangements are in place to conduct an audit of staff language skills and the use of the language within the Centres. This will be undertaken at least twice a year by the Unit's team of technical inspectors.
- As a Service, we take pride that this scheme has improved provision and there will be continuous improvement in the use of the Welsh language throughout our Leisure Centres for all our customers who receive services and activities to encourage "Healthy Living".

